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To

His Highness Sikander Saulat Iftikhar-ul-Mulk Nawab Haji Dr. Sir Muhammad Hamid-ullah Khan Bahadur, B.A., LL.D., (Alig.), G.C., G.C.S.I., G.C.I.E., C.V.O., the Ruler of Bhopal

For

His great regard and love for the
“ Poet of the East ”

**THE
METAPHYSICS OF IQBAL**

**THE
METAPHYSICS OF IQBAL**

BY

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With Foreword by

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Kashmiri Bazaar, LAHORE

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**First Published
1944**

**PRINTED BY MD. SHARIF
AT THE CALCUTTA ART PG. WORKS, LAHORE
PUBLISHED BY
SH. MUHAMMAD ASHRAF
KASHMIRI BAZAAR, LAHORE**

FOREWORD

By writing this treatise on the Metaphysics of Iqbal Dr. Ishrat Hasan has done a real service to the study of the great Poet-Philosopher. The fundamental conceptions of Iqbal—Intuition, self, world, God—required careful investigation and exact determination. Dr. Ishrat undertook this difficult task and carried it out successfully. To my mind this treatise is a genuine contribution to the understanding of Iqbal, and I strongly recommend it to those who would go deep down to the bottoms of his thought. Iqbal has been a great force in India for the last quarter of a century, and the mind of the present-day Indian Muslim cannot be grasped without a deep study of Iqbal.

S. Z. HASAN.

ALIGARH,
25th December, 1943.

PREFACE

In this monograph on the Metaphysics of Iqbal I have attempted to present Iqbal's position with but little reference to the Quran, and the Islamic mystics or philosophers, unless unavoidable. This I have done with a view to interpret his philosophical ideas by themselves. Indeed, to present his philosophy in relation to the Quran and the religious thought in Islam requires a separate treatment, and that can rightly be attempted only after Iqbal's Metaphysics has been thoroughly explained and understood by itself. I have presented the metaphysical part of his philosophy as he himself propounds it or as it can be deduced from his criticism of other theories, ancient, modern, and Islamic; for his negative is always a preface to the positive, and when he criticises some position he at the same time points out the positive direction in which his mind is moving.

Consequently, I have concentrated on his philosophical writings, specially his Lectures on the *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, for the support of my arguments and for the proof of my contentions. I have not depended for my conclusions on his poetry, great though the temptation might have been. They are sufficiently attested by his Lectures, his Metaphysics

in Persia, and some of his shorter papers and letters which have been published in various journals, magazines and books.

The thought of Iqbal seems to have passed through two stages—the Pre-Intuitionist and the Intuitionist. In the first stage, Iqbal follows the traditional ways of thought which due to their affinity with Pantheism appealed most to the broken and the tottering society of the Muslims of the time. But his visit to Europe energised his spirits, strengthened his will, and brought in its wake a political reaction in him. He began to emphasise action, activity and self-assertion, rather than passivity, indifference and self-negation. He gained strength for his thought from the study of Bergson, Nietzsche and McTaggart. This led him to accept the reality of the self and the force of the will as fundamental. But still all this could not satisfy his heart, nay not even his thought. He would affirm the knowledge of God, the knowledge of the Self and the knowledge of its freedom and immortality. He must claim Intuition of these. Here we do not stand thirsty at the shore of the Sea; we quaff the flowing current and wade through the very waters of infinity with all its accompanying horrors and terrors. We are aroused to the lengthening shadows of thought and to accuse it of being limited and incomplete. The Ultimate Reality and all its attending categories are affirmed on the basis of direct intuition.

This last stage is most important for his philosophy: and I have confined myself to it, for it is this stage which distinguishes Iqbal from Western thinkers on one hand, and Muslim philosophers on the other.

In this connection I have also discussed the influences of, and improvements on, the doctrines of McTaggart, Bergson, Nietzsche, Berkeley, Leibniz and Kant. But due to the fear of making the text rugged and burdened with this comparative study of Iqbal with other philosophers, I have, as far as I could, placed these comparisons in the foot-notes and not in the text.

A bibliography has been appended in the end. It includes practically all the works which have been published by Iqbal and on Iqbal so far.

I am indebted to my teacher Professor Doctor Syed Zafarul Hasan, of the Aligarh University, for his kind and instructive guidance and direction. It is with him that I have learnt to understand Religion and Philosophy. My thanks are also due to M. M. Sharif Esq., Reader, Muslim University, Aligarh, for his many valuable suggestions about the publication of this book.

ISHRAT ENVER

Muslim University,

ALIGARH.

1st December, 1943.

ABBREVIATIONS

- A. K. *Asrar-i-Khudi* by Iqbal.
- A. P. *Appearance and Reality* by Bradley.
- B. D. *Bang-i-Dara* by Iqbal.
- B. J. *Bal-i-Jibril* by Iqbal.
- C. E. *Creative Evolution* by Bergson.
- C. P. *Critique of Pure Reason* by Kant.
- D. D. *Dawn of the Day* by Nietzsche.
- F. *Fundamentals of Ethics* by Kant.
- H. C. *Hegelian Cosmology* by McTaggart.
- H. P. *History of Philosophy* by Weber and Perry.
- I. M. *Introduction to Metaphysics* by Bergson.
- I. P. *Introduction to Philosophy* by Paulsen.
- L. *Lectures* by Iqbal.
- M. M. *Matter and Mind* by Bergson.
- M. P. *Metaphysics in Persia* by Iqbal.
- M. T. *The Mujaddid's Conception of Tawhid* by Dr. Burhan Ahmad Faruqi.
- N. *Nietzsche* by Ludovice.
- P. *Prolegomena to any Future Metaphysics* by Kant.
- P. I. *Philosophy in Islam* by De Boer.
- P. L. *Philosophy of Leibniz* by Russel.
- P. M. *Piam-i-Mashriq* by Iqbal.
- P. R. *Critique of Practical Reason* by Kant.

- P. Z. Presidential remarks by Prof. Dr. Syed Zafarul Hasan on the Six Lectures, delivered by Iqbal, at the Muslim University, Aligarh, (1929).
- Q. Quran.
- S. S. The Secrets of the Self, an English translation of Asrar-i-Khudi by R. Nicholson.
- T. Tertium Organum by Ouspensky.
- W. P. Will-to-Power by Nietzsche.
- Z. A. Zaboor-i-Ajam by Iqbal.
- Z. K. Zarb-i-Kalim by Iqbal.

I INTRODUCTORY

Iqbal's is in the twentieth century, perhaps by far, the most consistent attempt to reconcile religion and philosophy in Islam. The great merit of his work is that he has reconstructed religious thought in Islam, and "carried out the task which centuries ago our great scholastics like Nazzam and 'Ashari set to themselves in the face of Greek science and philosophy."¹

His work of reconstruction, however, does not get its inspiration from Greek thought. On the contrary, he even goes to the extent of subjecting Greek thought to a trenchant criticism and points out that the spirit of Greek philosophy is purely speculative. Mere speculation, however, can neither afford to grasp the concrete world, nor is it serviceable in giving us any definite knowledge of the ultimate reality. Nay, it denies even the visible reality.² The speculation of Plato, for instance, led him to hold that the visible world was unreal.³ For it is in a constant flux; while the real must be permanent and eternal. The universal alone holds for ever. The Ideas, therefore, are permanent and eternal. They alone are the really real, and the world of sense which is in Becoming is

¹ P.Z.

² L., p. 8.

³ S.S., (p. 62), lines 650-55.

unreal. "Accordingly, the position of all genuine idealists," as Kant points out, "is that all cognition through the senses and experience is nothing but mere illusion, and only in the ideas of pure understanding and reason is there truth."¹ Speculation, without experience, however, can never lead to the sure foundations of knowledge and reality. It flutters its wing in the empty void and comes to no result. No knowledge is possible purely *a-priori*. Experience is a necessary step towards all knowledge.

Iqbal rather takes his inspiration from modern philosophy. Modern philosophy is, specially since Kant, essentially empirical. The spirit of Islam too is essentially empirical. The world for it is real. It is not a mere passing show. Experience is a necessary source of knowledge. Islam, as Iqbal points out, laid emphasis on experience long before modern sciences learnt to do so.²

The spirit of modern sciences, as that of some modern schools of philosophy, is, however, very dogmatic. They do lay emphasis on sense experience. But they tend to hold that the sensible alone is real. They close their eyes to the possibility of any reality beyond sense-experience.³ Islam on the contrary holds that beyond the sensible there is a new horizon—the horizon of transcendent reality. It accepts the sensible to be real, but what it insists upon is that the sensible or the empirical is not the only reality. The

¹ P., p. 147.

² L., p. 172.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 177.

present day scientists because of their allegiance to sense-experience have made themselves incapable of imagining a higher world than the world of mere sense-experience. The modern mind has, consequently, a natural inclination for the tangible and the perceptible, and denies every spiritual meaning and value to the world and to life. It has no faith in God or Immortality. Further, the material world assumes an invariable bond of necessity between all things and happenings. It is mechanical in its very nature. The man of science has, therefore, a prejudice in favour of the mechanical and tries to explain all organic growth, life, nay, even consciousness in terms of the mechanically necessary and determined. This leaves no room for freedom; and as a necessary consequence of this denial of freedom, all moral and religious aspirations are choked and blasted in the very bud of our heart. Freedom, however, is a necessary postulate for all our religious and practical activity. Mechanism would make our self a sheer phantom and an unreal supposition. Mechanism regards the self as a mere play of mechanical forces which has no being of its own.

The problem for Iqbal then is to affirm the existence of God, the reality of the Self, its Freedom and Immortality. His philosophy is essentially religious, though "he never," as Professor Nicholson very rightly points out, "treats Philosophy as a hand-maid of religion."¹ Religious truths are for

¹ S.S., Intro, p. xiii.

him ultimate; they are of paramount importance. He would affirm these truths. Mere theory and mere sense-experience, however, fail to affirm them.

Unlike Kant, Iqbal is unwilling to confine knowledge to empirical reality. He would go further. With the vigour of a poet-philosopher, he knocks at the doors of the Islamic mystic for a direct revelation of God, the mysteries of the Self, its Immortality and Freedom. So the existence and the reality of the Ultimate can be proved, and the nature thereof ascertained, only through an extraordinary experience, which Iqbal calls Intuition. This Intuition aims at comprehending the whole of reality. It is a unique experience and is in the possession of the chosen few only.

The call to Intuition has, as a matter of fact, been heard even before. The human mind being dissatisfied with the relative knowledge gained by reason and sense-experience has tended to seek mystic experience. The theoretical consciousness yearns to grasp the absolute reality, but is unable to do so, as was conclusively shown by Kant. This thirst for absolute knowledge can perhaps be quenched by intuition of a particular kind. The mystic claims that intuition is the way to satisfy man's inner yearning for absolute or perfect knowledge of reality.

Intuition, however, has been conceived for instance by Ghazzali and many other mystics as a faculty of knowledge which is unique and is of a different kind

from thought and perception. This has led many to doubt the validity of intuition. But Iqbal differs here. He holds intuition to be a faculty of knowledge like other faculties of knowledge, *viz.*, perception and thought. It is indeed a higher form of knowledge, but it is qualitatively of the same nature as our ordinary faculties. It is true that it is feeling but that does not mean a descent into subjectivism. The feeling is essentially cognitive in its character. It is as objective as sense-perception.

Further, the objectivity of Intuition was doubted because the mystic took the start from the apprehension of Ultimate Reality (God), and tended to confine Intuition to it. Iqbal would start with the intuition of his own Self, thus bringing Intuition nearer to our ordinary experience; and from the intuition of the Self he would go forward to the intuition of Reality and Absolute Reality.

The intuition of the Self is open to us all. In some moments of important decision and action we have it. This intuition takes us to the very roots of our existence and assures us directly of our own reality. The empiricists and the rationalists both, however, fail to reveal to us the true nature of our own self. The empiricists regard the Self as a mere come-and-go of psychical states. But by placing these states apart from each other they lose sight of the unity which binds them together in one whole. "Thus, however, much," as Bergson points out, "they

place the states side by side, multiplying points of contact and exploring the intervals, the ego always escapes them, so that they finish by seeing in it nothing but the vain phantom.”¹ The rationalists too are incapable of grasping the true nature of the self. They merely postulate a conceptual unity which they call ego and in which all the multiple states lie as if within a void. They do not get to the bottom of the thing, to the actual nature and the existence of the self. But the “true empiricism”² or Intuition directly lights up for us the subterranean depths of our being. It is only here that we find how the unity is a multiplicity and the multiplicity a unity. The self is not a mere sum of the static and the isolated states. Between two such states there is always to be found a third state. These states are closely intertwined with each other. They are like the ever on-rushing waves which cannot be segregated from each other and put on an insulated patch of dry land for isolated observation and experiment, as the psychologist would have it. Such observation and experiment does in no way reveal to us the essential nature of the life of the inner self. The self is essentially dynamic in its essence. It is of an ever-growing, ever-increasing and ever-active nature.

The intuition of the Self, then, gives us a point of departure from the rationalistic and the empirical methods of enquiry. It affords us a highway, which,

¹ I M., p. 27.

² *Ibid.*, p. 31.

though circuitous and difficult in its ascent, yet promises to lead us to a direct revelation of the ultimate nature of things. It makes for us, the intuition of God, not a mere hypothetical conjecture, but a real possibility. We may thus pass from our own being and nature to the Being of God and His essence by way of Intuition. This is why Iqbal so very often appeals to us for a close association and sympathy with our own self. For it will directly lead us to the affirmation of the reality of the self and its freedom and immortality; and further, it will open to us a new avenue of knowledge for the affirmation of the existence of God and the apprehension of His nature.

Iqbal, however, does not claim to have had the Intuition of God himself. He is sure that an intuition of the self did flash upon him; and he is further sure that the intuition of God must be characterised after the intuition of the self.

Consequently, the nature of God as revealed by Intuition is, firstly, dynamic and highly active in its essence. "Reality is one infinite life. It is a self-directing, self-conscious energy, continuously active. Every act of it is itself life which in its turn is a self-directing energy. Looked at from outside these acts are spatial things and events. Some of the acts in the course of development have become self-conscious. These are 'I' and 'You'." ¹

Secondly, God is not an Impersonal Being as the pantheists conceive Him. He is a Person; we can come in personal communion with Him. For it is the essence of life to manifest itself in a self. There is no such thing as cosmic life. Life must have a centre of reference, *viz.*, mind.

Thirdly, the existence of God does not involve the obliteration of our own self. The intuition of self confers on us the conviction of the permanent reality of our own self; and the intuition of God testifies this conviction of ours.

There is a gradual rising note of egohood in the whole universe. We are conscious of it firstly in our own self; secondly, in the objective nature before our eyes; and thirdly in the ultimate principle of all life *viz.*, God. Iqbal's philosophy is thus the *Philosophy of Egohood*. Egohood is for him the pivot of all reality. The best way of dealing with his philosophy then is first to discuss Intuition, and then to start with the Self, and passing through the thick and solid Material World, to arrive at God.

II

METHOD OF INTUITION

Kant in his *Prolegomena* raised the question: Is Metaphysics possible? His reply to this question is in the negative. His reasons for it are based upon the characteristics which are peculiar to our knowledge. Knowledge is determined by space and time. For the world consists of two factors, *viz.*, things and changes in things. Things without space are to us, however, incomprehensible. We see all things in space. What they are in themselves we cannot say, for to answer this question we must rise to higher levels of knowledge and divest things of the garbs of space. Again, the changes in things presuppose time. No change is possible without time. No time, no change. Further, Kant maintained that time and space are not objective realities. They are only our modes of apprehending reality. That is, they are subjective. They have no existence apart from the subject. Now time and space being subjective, and all things being in space and time, what we see are only phenomena. The things as they are in themselves, *i.e.*, noumena always elude our grasp; we cannot reach the ultimately real. Metaphysics, if it is an attempt to know the ultimately real, *i.e.*, the noumena, is, therefore impossible.

Kant's conclusion, then, is "withdrawal" in matters metaphysical.

Iqbal fully agrees with the view that time and space are not objective. There is no self-existent void in which things are situated, nor any self-existing time, given as a line on which we move. Space and time are for him, as they are for Kant, subjective. But from the subjectivity of space and time Kant concluded that all our knowledge is only of phenomena, *i.e.*, of things as they appear to us. Iqbal, however, parts company with Kant with regard to the possibility of the knowledge of noumena, of things-in-themselves. "Kant's view of the thing-in-itself and the thing as it appears to us, very much determined the character of his question regarding the possibility of metaphysics."¹ Kant is right so far as the normal level of experience is concerned. But the question is "whether the normal level is the only level of knowledge-yielding experience."² Iqbal maintains that it is not the only level.

For the import of time and space varies according to the varying grades of beings. Time and space are not the fixed and unvarying modes, as Kant would have them, into which all our knowledge is moulded and determined.³ These modes themselves admit of new meaning in relation to beings higher and lower than ourselves,⁴ and consequently, there may be a grade of experience in which there is neither space nor time.

¹ L., p. 172.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 180.

Taking space, it is a "dynamic appearance".¹ An attempt conducive to this thesis was made by Iraqi also. According to him there are three kinds of spaces—the space of material bodies, the space of immaterial beings, and the space of God. "The space of material bodies is further divided into three kinds. Firstly, the space of gross bodies of which we predicate roominess. In this space movement takes time, bodies occupy their respective places and resist displacement. Secondly, the space of subtle bodies, *e.g.*, air and sound. In this space too bodies resist each other, and their movement is measurable in terms of time which, however, appears different to the time of gross bodies. The air in a tube must be displaced before other air can enter into it; but the time of sound-waves is practically nothing compared to the time of the gross bodies. Thirdly, we have the space of light. The light of the sun instantly reaches the remotest limits of the earth. Thus in the velocity of light time is reduced almost to zero. It is, therefore, clear that the space of light is different to the space of air and sound. There is, however, a more effective argument than this. The light of a candle spreads in all directions in a room without displacing the air in the room; and this shows that the space of light is more subtle than the space of air.—But while the element of distance is not entirely absent, there is no possibility of mutual resistance in the space of light. The light of a candle reaches upto a certain point

¹ L., p. 190.

only, and the lights of a hundred candles intermingle in the same room without displacing one another.”¹—Now coming to the space of immaterial beings, *e.g.*, angels, it should be marked that the element of distance is not entirely absent from their space, for immaterial beings, while they can easily pass through the stone walls, cannot altogether dispense with motion. The human soul is, however, spatially free. It is neither at rest nor in motion. Lastly, the space of God is “free from all dimensions”.² It is the meeting point of all infinities.

According to Iqbal, however, Iraqi is wrong in supposing that space is something which is given. Iraqi is suffering from a “natural prejudice in favour of the traditional Aristotelean idea of a fixed universe.”³ But the universe is dynamic and growing. There is no absolute space in which things are situated. The very conception of space is dependent upon our subjective constitution.⁴ The space of the human beings is measurable in three dimensions—length, breadth, and depth. It is, however, possible to diminish or increase our dimensions by decreasing or increasing our senses and psychic powers. Take a snail. It possesses only sensation. “It always moves in a single line from the unpleasant to the pleasant, and in all probability except for this line it is not conscious of any thing and does not sense anything. This line is its entire world.”⁵

¹ L, pp. 129-30.

² *Ibid*, p. 130.

³ *Ibid*.

⁴ With regard to this point, Iqbal seems to accept the view of Ouspensky. In order to elucidate this thought, I have summarised here the arguments of Ouspensky, as maintained in *Tertium Organum*.

⁵ T., p. 106.

The snail is, therefore, a one dimensional being. "Making efforts with all its entire body it moves forward to the fresh edge of the leaf, but it seems as if the leaf were coming to it, appearing at that moment as if out of time."¹ The entire universe consists for it in the future and in the past, *i.e.*, in time. Now, an animal possessing perception over and above sensation will sense the world differently from that of a one-dimensional being; such an animal will perceive the world as a surface. It may be questioned why should the world appear as a surface to it. It will appear to it as a surface because it appears to us also as a surface. The difference between us and the animal, however, lies in this that we know that the world is not a surface while the animal cannot know it.² It accepts everything just as it appears. Again, the animal cannot measure the three directions all at once. This can be proved by the fact that the animals have no concepts. For instance, "in order to measure the cube in three directions it is necessary, while measuring it in one direction, to keep in mind the two other dimensions also, *i.e.*, to remember them. But it is possible to keep them in mind as concepts only."³ Therefore, the animals having no concepts are two-dimensional only. It cannot perceive the third dimension: "The third dimension it constantly senses but does not see."⁴ For instance, it cannot perceive angles and curved surfaces. These do not lie for it in the present. They lie in the

¹ T., p. 107.² *Ibid.*, p. 101.³ *Ibid.*, p. 102.⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 104.

future. As it moves on the curved surface it finds that new lines become visible and then disappear. Our third dimension for it then lies in time. But a man does not take any time to see all the three dimensions simultaneously. What is time for the animal is for him a spatial phenomena.

Now it has so far been proved that our space is not an objective reality; the space of some animals is one-dimensional, of others two-dimensional, and ours three-dimensional. The fact of there being dimensions less than three, leads us to the possibility of dimensions more than three.¹ These, however, will be possible by the augmentation of our psychic powers, for, as we have already seen, an increase in the number of our psychic powers inevitably leads to a collateral increase in the number of dimensions.

Now taking time; it too admits of different varieties "relative to the varying grades of beings." The time of gross bodies, as Iraqi points out, is of such a nature that "as long as one day does not pass away, the succeeding day does not come."² But the time of immaterial beings, though serial in character, is such that "a whole year in the time of gross bodies is not more than a day in the time of an immaterial being."³ The divine time is, maintains Iraqi, specious present; it is absolutely free from the quality of passage, *viz.*,

¹ Iqbal seems to concur with this thought of Ouspensky only (L., pp 38, 39). He, however, differs from Ouspensky's conception of time. Time, according to Ouspensky, is a spatial phenomena, lying somewhere in space. The fourth dimension of Ouspensky is then synonymous with space. For Iqbal, however, time is not spatial. It is durational.

² L., p. 71.

³ *Ibid.*

change and succession. "God's eye sees all the visibles and His ear hears all the audibles in one indivisible act of perception."¹ Thus divine time is one eternal 'now'. Time is, therefore, relative to the various grades of beings. Indeed, adds Iqbal, it is different at different levels of experience in the same being. On the level of perception time appears to us purely spatial. We translate our movements in terms of 'now' and 'not-now'. These two terms mean practically the same as 'here' and 'not-here'. Time is a line part of which we have travelled and part of which we shall travel in future, and only some portion of which we occupy in the present. As a matter of fact, the present does not exist. It is a moment which either lies in some near future or in some recent past. But time, when observed in relation to the inner self, is not at all serial in character. In it the past, the present, and the future all intertwine and form a unity. It is, as Bergson would call it, 'Duration' in which there is succession but no change.

Time and space, therefore, which Kant called the forms of all experience, are not static and determined in their import. Their meaning is variable as psychic powers increase or decrease. This gives us the possibility of there being other levels of experience than the normal level of spatio-temporal experience to which Kant confines knowledge. Of course, Metaphysics is not possible if the normal experience is the only

¹ L., p. 72.

experience or the final stage of all experience; but it must be assumed to be possible if there is the possibility of other levels of experiences which reveal the nature of reality as it is in itself, free from spatio-temporal determinations.

Now, maintains Iqbal, there *is* a level of experience over and above the normal level; and that level is experience by Intuition. It is a unique experience, an experience of its own kind, and essentially different from every other kind of experience. It is other than perception, and it is other than thought. In Intuition we transcend the limitations of both. It reveals to us a reality which is grasped neither by perception nor by thought. The following are its characteristics:

1. Intuition is an *immediate* experience of the Real. The really real is revealed to us in this experience. Being immediate experience, it resembles perception. The Absolute Reality is, in experience by intuition, directly apprehended. God is known "just as we know other objects." Knowledge is here direct. Intuition, therefore, is opposed to thought. Knowledge gained by thought is always mediate and indirect. In thought there is no direct perception of the object. Knowledge gained through the help of thought for ever remains inferential. In intuition, however, the object of knowledge is directly perceived as something over there. "God is not a mathematical entity or a system of concepts mutually related to one

another and having no reference to experience.”¹ He is a concrete objective Being. Intuition is like perception which supply data for knowledge. The presence of God directly hovers over the heart and He is perceived immediately. God, accordingly, as Ibn Arabi points out, is a “percept” and not a concept.² We can behold Him as we behold things before our eyes.—But Intuition should not, on this account, be regarded as merely on the same level with perception. It differs from perception. In perception sensation plays an important role. There is no perception without sensation. All our perceptions are made possible because of the sense organs. In intuition, however, “sensation in the physiological sense of the word does not play any part.”³ Here sense organs have no play. Further, perception is possible only of parts. It grasps reality piecemeal. Our knowledge through perception, therefore, is always to be supplemented by other perceptions; and still it remains always incomplete. Perception cannot grasp the Whole. But intuition grasps the Whole. It is direct apprehension of the whole reality.

2. Intuition is the peculiar property of the *heart*.⁴ It is not a possession of the mind or the intellect. Mind or thought grasps only the phenomenal world, *i.e.*, that aspect of reality which is revealed in sense-perception. The heart, however, brings us into contact with an aspect of reality, not open to sense-perception.⁵

¹ L , p 17

² *Ibid* , 178.

³ *Ibid* , p. 15.

⁴ *Ibid*.

⁵ *Ibid*.

Further, thought always "moves round the objects."¹ Its function is to grasp reality with categories. These, however, are of our own giving. They are like "labels" which we paste on things and which the things originally do not possess. Things, therefore, as grasped by thought, never come to us as they are in themselves, but only as they are in relation to us. All knowledge gained by thought is, therefore, relative.² Consequently, it is always of appearance.—But through the heart, by intuition, we can transcend our self, and ascend to the absolute. We can gain knowledge of the object by Heart,—by placing ourself in very heart of the object. This is what we do in intuition. This, however, is possible only through the medium of feeling. This feeling-experience is a unique feeling in which the whole is revealed as if in perception.—Being a matter of feeling, intuition further differs from thought in another important respect. Knowledge gained by thought is essentially communicable, because thought grasps its objects through the medium of concepts or universals, which are expressed in words and can be made common property. But intuition is essentially uncommunicable, because it is feeling and feeling cannot be conveyed to others.³ It is highly personal. That is why the exact content of the mystic experience cannot be put in words so as to make it accessible to others. Language fails us here. Intuition overflows all words, concepts and categories.—The mystic experience, being a matter

¹ I.M., p 1.² C.P., pp. 232, foll.³ L pp 19, 20.

of feeling, it should not on that account be thought that in his specific experience the mystic descends into the mists of his own subjectivity. No, his experience has a "cognitive content." It is as objective as our normal experiences are. "The feeling ends in the consciousness of an object. No feeling is so blind as to have no idea of its own object."¹ The object of mystic experience is real and existential.

3. Intuition is an *unanalysable whole*.² In it the whole of reality is given in one indivisible unity. Even the subject of experience himself is "submerged"³ in the unity. There is in this experience no possibility of the distinction of the self, from the not-self. The mystic becomes oblivious of his own self; he obliterates himself; he does not exist any more; he is not other than his own object. Reality reveals itself to him as One Whole which is indivisible and unanalysable. That is not the case in the normal level of experience. The normal level of experience can be distinctly analysed into subject and object. Further, the object breaks up into various sense-stimuli. Innumerable data of experience merge into the single experience of the table and out of this wealth of data I select those that fall into a certain order of space and time and "round them off in reference to the table." In the act of intuition, however, this is not possible. Here reality is revealed as one unanalysable unity.

¹ L., p 20.

² *Ibid.*, p. 17.

³ This word should not be taken to mean total "absorption" or "abasement" of the self in the Unity. The self according to Iqbal, never melts away, but is only temporarily "suppressed" in the act of the mystic experience.

4. Further, in intuition this “unanalysable unity” reveals itself as a *unique Self*.¹ It manifests itself as a Person. This “unique self” transcends our own self. It is like something “over there”, always beyond us. And yet, what seems paradoxical, the mystic is in the closest association with it. Though transcendent, it is yet immanent, for in the act of experience the mystic has a veritable consciousness of Perfect Unity with it.² His own self is submerged in this all-comprehending unity. The ordinary distinction of subject and object disappears. All the same what is directly apprehended is a self, a Person. But a self has a mind. The mind of God, however, we cannot comprehend. He, therefore, for ever remains “beyond” us,—“beyond the beyond”. However, it is the mind of God as a Self that the mystic apprehends in intuition. This is corroborated by response; for “response is no doubt the test of the presence of a conscious self.”³

5. The act of intuition, because it perceives reality as a whole, engenders the sense that “serial time” is unreal. The mystic does not traverse reality with a slow foot and see it in isolated and partial aspects; he grasps it in its wholeness in a single moment of intuition. He apprehends “Eternity”—the whole of time from its beginning to its end. Sequence in time, therefore, does not exist for him. It is unreal.—

¹ L., p. 18.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 18 19

Now Bergson too pleads for Intuition. But for him intuition is essentially "intellectual sympathy".¹ Mere sympathy, however, strictly speaking, is not intuition. Sympathy does help us in ascending to intuition; it is not intuition itself. Intuition is a "direct perception" of reality. Perception involves two factors, the perceiver and the perceived. Mere sympathy tends to negate the perceiver. In order to have objective knowledge of a thing we must, as Bergson exhorts us, divest ourselves from all memory elements. But this would, in the end, mean the total negation of our self, for self is nothing but memories stitched together. "My recognition of a place or a person means reference to my past experience and not the past experience of another ego."² It is this unique inter-relation of our mental states that we express by the word "I". In this essential unity and diversity consists the ego. Bergson touched only the outer fringe of Intuition. He did not grasp its essential nature.³—

Now it may, in the first instance, be said that there is no objective reality corresponding to intuition, *e.g.*, the intuition of God. Knowledge, through sense, is the only type of knowledge we can have. But as has been shown above, there are besides the normal level of experience other ways of knowing reality. Indeed, the intuition of self has given us a point of

¹ I.M., p. 8.

² L., p. 95.

³ Iqbal also differs from Bergson as to the scope of intuition, as will become apparent in the succeeding chapters.

departure from the ordinary ways of knowing. A direct perception of the self by intuition is incomprehensible in the ordinary sense. But for that reason it cannot be rejected.—The same can be said with regard to the intuition of God. “The evidence of religious experts in all ages and countries is that there are potential types of consciousness lying close to our normal consciousness. These types of consciousness open up possibilities of life-giving and knowledge-yielding experiences. The mystic is sure that God is a veritable fact of his mystic experience. He perceives Him directly. There is no doubt and obscurity about it. And the way of intuition is open to all. The atheist himself may have the intuition of God if he takes the necessary trouble to get it.

Further, it is no objection to say that Intuition is “organically determined”; that in order to be able to have intuitions one must have a definite type of temperament and mood,¹ and that not a very healthy one; indeed, mystic’s experience is the product of a disorganised brain. A disorganised brain alone, suffering from neurosis or from a disease of a similar stamp, is susceptible to intuitions rather than a brain in perfect normal condition. Indeed, a psychopath can claim to his credit the possibility of the mystic intuition. He alone can give to “airy nothing a local habitation” and a name.—But is it not true that all mental states are organically determined. “The

¹ L., p. 22.

scientific form of mind is as much organically determined as the religious.”¹ For particular kinds of experience certain kinds of temperament are necessary. Further, to say that the religious experiences are abnormal or neurotic does not prove the point that they are worthless.² Firstly, they are not abnormal; they are perfectly normal in the sense that they reveal objective reality. They have a “cognitive content”. They are not mere illusions. Secondly, even if abnormal and neurotic, the experience is the experience of truth. That is why it has an inflexible power of transforming the personality of the subject of experience. It has got “the capacity to centralise the forces of the ego, and thereby to endow him with a new personality.”³ It breaks open for him the hidden possibilities of perfection and spiritual growth. Indeed, in the case of a prophet this so-called neurotic gives him power, not only to develop his own personality, but also to hammer and mould the whole world around him. In view of his inner experiences, he finds the world defective and backward. He inspires the career and shapes the conduct of humanity according to his own spiritual experience. Is it all mere fancy? No, a mere fanciful imagination is not capable of transforming the destinies of humanity. There are fancies also in the prophet. But then the prophet sifts the pure from the alloy.⁴ This he does in conformity with an imperative from above. That is why his

¹ L, p. 22.

² *Ibid.*, p. 179.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 22, 26, 180.

experience appeals to the heart of so many millions. Humanity has always reclined its head on religion and it is only there that it has found peace and contentment. The whole history of mankind is a testimony to it. Religion is not a silly fancy. It is a "deliberate enterprize to seize the ultimate principle of value."¹ Consequently, it has always been placed highest in the scale of values.—Further, what right has psychology to call the mystic experience as abnormal? It has not so far investigated the mystic consciousness at all. It has not even, so far, examined the psychology of genius. The experience of genius too, though perfectly normal, may appear to the psychologist as neurotic and abnormal. The point is that psychology has not so far accepted the possibility of there being levels of experiences other than the so-called normal one.² Such levels may be perfectly sound and serene in their own sphere and be determined by organic conditions differing from the 'normal'. Every organic conditions differing from the normal is not, however, necessarily an abnormality and a neurosis. If there is for us a hope beyond the normal experience, "we must courageously face the possibility even though it may disturb or tend to modify our normal ways of life and thought."³

It is sometimes said that religion is the expression of our suppressed desires and impulses. Man cannot, says the psychoanalyst, find satisfaction in the

¹ L. pp. 178-79.

² *Ibid.*, p. 183.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

environment in which he finds himself. He is dissatisfied with it. This dissatisfaction is due partly to his fiery soul which always aspires for new hopes and new desires, and partly to the insurmountable difficulties and impossibilities in which he finds himself. He is not able to enjoy the satisfaction of his whole nature. He enjoys only some of his desires, and that too at the expense of others. The rejected impulses go into the sub-conscious chamber of his brain and lie there to jump on the conscious. In dreams and neurosis and in like activities these repudiated impulses find an opportunity to satisfy themselves. "Religion is a pure fiction created by these repudiated impulses with a view to find a kind of fairy land for free unobstructed movement."¹ Religion, therefore is a way of escape from the dreadful, hard, and stupendous reality that confronts man from all sides. He creates such fictions as to make his life and existence tolerable and worth-living. Religion is such a fiction in which there is for him the balm of sufferings, the stimulus for his efforts and the hope of his victory over the evils of his environment.—But firstly, is not the supposition of an "unconscious region" in the mind a gratuitous hypothesis?² There is no "lumber room" behind the normal self, wherein the vagrant impulses may lie in wait. The fact, however, of the vagrant impulses rushing to the conscious region proves rather that there are ways of response to reality other than the

¹ L., p. 23.

² *Ibid.*

normal ones to which we are accustomed. Secondly, even accepting the reality of the unconscious, the mystic experience is by no means casually determined by the unconscious and hence subjective. The mystic is fully aware that he stands face to face to an objective reality which is consciously apprehended and intimately adored. The experience of the mystic is, like that of a scientist, a "concrete experience." Herein there is no imagery or fancy. In fact, it must be said in justice to religion that it insisted on the necessity of concrete experience "long before sciences learnt to do so."¹ Thirdly, though there may be some religions which recommend ways of escape from the hard facts of reality, this is not true of all religions. Islam, for instance, exhorts us not to fly away, but to face and conquer the difficulties and the despair of life and existence.

Freud goes further. He attributed all our desires to sex-impulse. This being the only ultimate motive, all yearnings are forms of the sex-impulse. Religion too is the working of the same impulse and nothing more. The sex-impulse, when thwarted by the environment, goes to the unconscious chamber of the mind wherein it lies as a latent force. It, however, manifests itself in all forms of worship and adoration which afford man its partial and indirect realization.—But that is not true. Religious consciousness is totally different from the sexual. Nay, the two are often

¹ L., p. 172.

hostile to each other. Religion puts self-restraint on man and checks and controls the sexual impulse. However it should not, on this account, be thought, as Jung wrongly maintains, that religion is a mere biological device to put ethical restraint on the activities of the libido. The aim of religion, according to Jung, is to establish round the human society "barriers of an ethical nature, in order to protect it against the otherwise unrestrainable instincts of the ego." But religion is definitely something more than ethics. Its aim is the evolution of the ego, and this evolution is to be looked for far beyond the present span of life. Ethics and self-restraint do indeed help us in our yearning for evolution. But they are only "preliminary stages in the ego's evolution."¹ The essence of religion is a yearning not for perfection, but for a direct contact with the ultimate reality. Religion is not, as Mathew Arnold puts it, "morality touched with emotion." It is far more than that. It aims at a close association with the ultimate source of all life and being. This yearning expresses itself in prayer and adoration.² Even in the act of intuition the mystic does not yearn for perfection; he rather yearns for remaining in the closest intimacy with Ultimate Reality for ever. Indeed, some of the mystics, while having this experience, even repudiate the moral code with all its formalities and formulations.³

Religion is not a code of beliefs and doctrines and

¹ L., p. 58.

² *Ibid.*

³ As for instance Shams Tabriz, Hallaj and a host of others.

hence of a dogmatic ethics. All good religions are a "deliberate enterprize to seize the ultimate principle of value."¹ All religions stir in us a consciousness of the super-sensual Beyond, the Ultimately Ultimate. "The main purpose of the Quran is to awaken in man the higher consciousness of his manifold relations with God and the universe."² And the ultimate end of this flashing consciousness for man is to help him to discover for himself the really Real.—Religious life may be divided into three stages—faith, thought, and discovery.³ In the first stage we accept, without any doubt, what is said to us as a tenet or command. In the second, we try to understand rationally what we are asked to believe. We make a metaphysics of our faith. In the third, we wish to come into direct contact with the ultimate reality. Here we desire to discover for ourselves the source of all law and being. We wish to have an experience of Ultimate Reality ourselves. It should not, therefore, be thought that "the mystic experience, which qualitatively does not differ from the prophet, has now ceased to exist as a vital fact."⁴ Direct experience is indeed the real purpose of all religious life. Religious beliefs and tenets hang upon us as a heavy weight in the first stage. But their true significance is directly perceived in the third stage. They do not then remain impositions from without, but are found to be the very source of satisfaction to the demands of our thirsty soul. They are revealed to be helpful to rise to the vision of

¹ L., p. 179.² *Ibid.*, p. 8.³ *Ibid.*, p. 171.⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 120.

Him who is the source of all law and being. Religion thus is essentially a process of discovery and experience.

But religious experience, it may be urged, is purely personal and consequently incommunicable. The mystic's experience will, for ever, remain his own. It is incapable of being conveyed to others in concepts and hence it cannot be a source of common knowledge.—But that does not prove the invalidity of intuition as a knowledge-yielding experience. The knowledge gained by it may be incommunicable; but it is still knowledge and the direct knowledge of the ultimate reality. The incommunicability of religious experience does not prove the point that “religious man's pursuit is futile.”¹ Moreover, the incommunicability of this experience is not a serious objection at all. Even the experience of our own self is not communicable to others. But still we have that experience and by it we know that our self is existent and real. That the mystic experience is incommunicable goes rather to show a fundamental truth, *viz.*, that the essential nature of the ego is unique and that its varying shades of feelings and experiences are of a highly peculiar nature, and nothing unique is communicable in common concepts. And why should we make an apotheosis of the knowledge by concepts? The concepts are incapable of adequately mirroring even our ordinary experiences. As Bergson points out, concepts “are symbols substituted for the object they symbolise and demand no effort on our part. Examined

¹ L., p. 173

closely each of them retains only that part of the object which is common to it and to others.”¹ It never gives us the individual essence of anything. Knowledge by means of concepts is the knowledge only of relations and similarities and not of the thing itself.

Lastly, it is said sometimes that the experiences of the mystics contradict each other. One mystic affirms Theism, while another Pantheism. This disparity goes to prove that their experiences are not objective, but only creations of their fancies.—That there is a disparity between the experience of various mystics is undoubtedly a fact. But this fact goes to show that there is open to the mystic the possibility of multifarious experiences, and that these experiences are graded ones. The final experience, however, is not the stage where the mystic loses himself in the Loved One and vanishes like a drop in ocean, but where his personality is all the more affirmed and realised. “The end of the ego’s search is not emancipation from the limitation of individuality; it is on the contrary a more precise definition of it.”² The realisation is gradual and the experience objective.

¹ I.M., p. 15.

² L., p. 187.

III THE SELF

Iqbal's philosophy in its main strain, is the philosophy of the self. The self is at once the starting, and the basic point of his thought. It is the self which affords him a highroad to metaphysics, because it is the intuition of the self which makes metaphysics possible for him. Iqbal claims himself to have had this intuition.¹ The Self is a veritable reality. It exists and exists in its own right. We know by intuition that it is most real. We can intuit its reality directly. Intuition of the self thus gives us a direct and an unflinching conviction of the reality of our own experience. And further, intuition, not only affirms the reality of the self, but discloses to us its essence and nature also. Self as revealed in intuition, is essentially directive, free and immortal.

The reality of the self has, however, been denied by the pantheists. They regard the world of phenomena as non-existent and unreal. With the passing away of the world as vapoury, man also, with all his moral and social aspirations and responsibilities, dwindles away into nothingness. Action, effort and progress, whether it be of individuals or that of nations,

¹ L , pp. 44, 45.

cannot be maintained on pantheistic grounds.¹ Hence to regard the self as truly existent, as really real, goes against the very roots of pantheism which accepts neither any finite centre of experience nor attributes any objective reality to the world.

Iqbal in course of time became fully alive to the dangerous consequences of pantheism, of which he himself had been, for sometime, enamoured in the beginning of his thought. His arguments against it can be summarised into two :

Firstly, the sense-data and the perceptual level of thought cannot be regarded as unreal. The world exists² We cannot doubt that. The pantheist, however, may maintain that our senses delude us and the world only appears to exist. In order to break off with pantheism, therefore, more force of thought and certainty is required than the mere perception of phenomena would grant to us.

Hence Iqbal brings a second vital consideration and an unimpeachable certainty against pantheism ; he appeals to the reality of the self or the 'ego' as he calls it.³

That the self is in some sense or other real, even pantheism cannot wholly deny. There is for the pantheist an incumbent duty to explain the being of the so-called objective world. This, however, can be

¹ S S , p xviii.

² S. S , Sec vii , lines 630-70 , further see L. , pp. 9, 10.

³ S S. , p. xvii.

done in two ways. Either the phenomena may be regarded as the emanation of God or His manifestation. But both these attempts eventually end in the assumption that there are in the objective world various grades of existence.¹ Consequently, some grades of beings, which possess a closer affinity with the nature of God, are to be regarded as more real than the other strata of beings. So it is wellnigh impossible to deny the higher reality of the self even on the pantheistic grounds. It was perhaps this that shook the very fibres of Iqbal's earlier thought which was pantheistic in its trend; and he turned to emphasise the relative superiority and reality of the human self over and against the rest of phenomena.

He further gained vital strength for this thought from his teacher McTaggart. The latter, following Hegel's doctrine of the Absolute Idea, regards reality as spirit. The Spirit is, however, necessarily differentiated on the principle of Hegel; and further each of these differentiations, being not the whole of the spirit is finite. McTaggart sees in this principle of differentiation a possibility of proving that the finite egos are the only differentiations of the Absolute, and accordingly the only really real and immortal beings.² The finite differentiations, however, do not destroy the unity of the Absolute, for unity is the essence of the Absolute. This is possible only if the whole is completely within each part; for otherwise

¹ M. P., pp. 116, 134, 135, 155.

² H. C., p. 71.

the unity would lie merely in the sum total of parts, and that would make the parts (or differentiations) of more importance than the Absolute itself. Further, the differentiations or parts should be wholly within the Whole or the Absolute; otherwise the unity of the Absolute would not be truly differentiated into finite parts or differentiations on the principle of Hegel.

Now such a relation between the whole and the parts is conceivable only in a community of persons.¹ Here each person represents the whole, and that through cognition. The self-conscious individuals know the whole, *viz.*, the community; the whole exists in the cognition of it. The whole then is wholly represented in each individual. And further, the community in order to be the whole must have these parts, *viz.*, individuals. Accordingly, the individual egos as possessing the attribute of cognition are to be regarded as the necessary differentiations of the Absolute. They alone truly and wholly represent the Absolute. Being the only necessary differentiations they should further be regarded as the only real and the only immortal beings, and not vapoury and illusory as the pantheists would have it.²

Iqbal seems to have been deeply influenced by this trend of thought, to make it the foundation of his subsequent philosophy. In his criticism of pantheism he points out that the self, being real and existent, its end cannot be self-absorption in the Absolute, as the

¹ H. C., p. 18.

² Ibid., p. 37.

pantheists maintain.¹ That would imply the very negation of the ego. The thought that I am non-existent, non-real, is revolting both to the thinking and the practical self of man. *Cogito Ergo Sum*, i.e., I think, therefore, I exist, is the historical utterance of Descartes. All thinking presupposes a subject who thinks. Therefore, the subject of our thinking process does exist.²

Similarly, it is true that all action presupposes some one to act; *Volo Ergo Sum*, i.e., I will, therefore, I exist. But still these are only inferences. They do not go far enough. The self still remains a concept.

Can we go further? Yes, says Iqbal, we can intuit the self. We can directly see that the self is real and existent. Indeed our selfhood is the most real thing we can know. Its reality is a fact.³ We directly apprehend it and affirm its reality on the basis of a direct intuition of it. This intuition, however, is possible only in moments of great decision, action and deep feeling. Action, effort and struggle open to us the deep recesses of our own being. We directly perceive our own self to be existent. The self is revealed as the centre of all our activity and action. This centre is essentially the core of our personality. It is to be named as ego. It is the ego which is at work in our likes and dislikes, judgments and resolutions. This ego is directly revealed to be existent and real. The knowledge of the existence of the ego is in

¹ S. S., p. xviii.

² Z.A., p. 237.

³ P.M. 38.

no way an inference: it is a direct perception of the self itself. It is intuition. Intuition alone, thus, gives the surest ground for the existence and the reality of the self.

But now what is the nature of the self? Ghazzalli for instance¹ regard the self to be a separate entity over and above the mental states and experiences. It is a substance, which is simple, indivisible, and immutable. The multiple experiences come and go but the soul-substance remains the same for ever. But this definition of the self does not give us any clue as to its nature. Firstly, it is a metaphysical entity and it has been assumed to explain our experiences. But do our experiences inhere in it as colour inheres in a body—are they related to it as qualities are related to material substances?² Certainly not. Secondly, the unity of experience on which the simplicity, and hence the immutability of the soul substances is based neither proves its indivisibility nor immutability, as Kant points out.³ Thirdly, the theory cannot explain the psychological phenomena of double personality.⁴ Thus the metaphysical school of thought leads us nowhere as to the nature of the self.

Nor does the orthodox psychological school. Psychology regards the self to be a mere flux of sensations, feelings and thought. It studies them separately and does not point out how the one is connected with the other. It regards the self to be a

¹ L., p. 95.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

mere accumulation of experiences. But the self is not a mere congeries of experiences. There is behind all the multiple experiences an inner unity also. It is this unity which is the pivot of all experiences. It is the nucleus of our existence. Psychology does not grasp this inner nature of the self.

Leaving rationalism and empiricism alone, we must, says Iqbal, turn to the inner depths of our own consciousness, and have recourse to intuition. It is in intuition that the true nature and essence of the self is revealed. But the self, as revealed in intuition, can with great difficulties and at great risks be described in words and customary language. Our language does not afford us a good vehicle for any new experience of a higher consciousness. It will, therefore, be a proper step to probe into the nature of the self after a due apology for the incomplete, and in many ways defective, terminology and language which is wholly confined to old ways of thought and traditional philosophies.

It is true that the self is a come-and-go of experiences as the psychologists maintain. But these experiences are, in no way, to be treated as separate and segregated from each other. They never stand alone, and are never observed in isolation. Experience is continuous and without break. The self is a constant flux of sensations, feelings and affections, etc. There is within us a "succession without change." It is pure movement. And further, behind all this mul-

tiplicity of feelings there is a unity which stitches the multiple experiences like pearl beads in one thread. There is therefore, a multiplicity in unity and a unity in multiplicity, as Bergson would say.¹

By unity, however, is here meant that the various experiences are felt by a single ego—by an ‘I’. It is the ego that feels the flux of affections and experiences. The ego appreciates itself in its own activity. It is essentially “appreciative.” But this appreciation would come to it only if its activity is purposeful. There would be no appreciation without achievement, and no achievement without purpose. The self, accordingly, always moves in some direction. Thus it is Directive in its essential nature.²

Accordingly the life of self lies essentially in its “will-attitudes”. Its very existence in fact depends upon action, wishing and desiring. A man devoid of these is devoid of life. Life for us is synonymous with desires, longings and yearnings. The more we taste of them, the more we ascend in the scale of life. Our whole being hinges upon a life of desires and doings. In the absence of these our life would approximate to the lifeless and the inert.³ Now desires have for themselves a creative force and power; they stir us to life and action. They present to us new horizons and new ideals. Under their influence our whole being seems charged with life as if under some electric power.⁴

¹ A comparative study of Iqbal, Bergson and Nietzsche regarding the nature of self is detailed out in the next chapter.

² L., p. 97.

³ A. K., p. 16.

⁴ *Ibid.*

This creative force of desires or "Soz", as Iqbal calls it, is the core of our personality. The ego grows and expands into a strong and powerful personality by the ever shining light of desires and aspirations. Consequently it is wrong, and fundamentally wrong, as some lines of thought have tried to teach that we should get rid of desires and that higher life consists in a state of want of desires

Now desires become highly strengthened and forceful in love or "Ishq".¹ Love gives a new life, a new Soz and fire to them. It is in love alone that a man constantly feels the onrush of ever new desires, solicitations, yearnings and longings. Love then gives a meaning and a new force to life. "The Ego is fortified by Love (Ishq). This word is used in a very wide sense and means the desire to assimilate and absorb. Its highest form is the creation of values and ideals and the endeavour to realise them."²

All desires, however, whether they be strengthened by love or not, move in some direction. They presuppose an environment. They cannot grow, nay they cannot even subsist, without relations with an objective world. Hence it is that the life of the ego depends upon its having established some connections with an

¹ A. K., p 18.

² S S, p xxv.

Note. Iqbal has laid the greatest emphasis on this point in his poetry and teaching, which are full of them. The teaching of Nietzsche is as cognate to it that one cannot help thinking that Iqbal has been deeply influenced by Nietzsche. But Iqbal certainly goes beyond Nietzsche in moralising and spiritualising this element.

objective reality—the world, the community or society or Ultimate Reality. The self cannot grow in isolation and solitude.

But the ego, as said before, has to confront a non-ego at every step. Here an important question arises. Is the activity of the ego determined by its own self or by things external to it? The question in its ordinary sense means whether we are free or not? The ego in its present environment seems to be determined by the various factors surrounding it. It has been said that all our activities are, in the end, determined by our material requirements and physical conditions.¹ It is they which force us to action. All our actions are mechanically conditioned by the laws of causality. By causality, however, is here meant that every event is necessarily determined by a preceding event. Certain antecedents unavoidably lead to certain definite consequences. There being no action without some necessary antecedents, our actions are wholly determined by them. Hence there is no freedom. The determining conditions may not necessarily be material, they may be mental. Feelings and thoughts are determined by our previous thoughts and feelings. One feeling leads to the other and the last thought is causally connected with that which preceded it. Not only the material phenomena, but the mental world of our activity and thought also is, therefore, bound to the laws of mechanism and necessity.² There

¹ *L.*, p. 101.

² *Id.*, pp. 102-103.

is no freedom possible either in the world outside us, or in the self inside us.

But if thought and action are causally determined we are driven to two conclusions: Firstly, that thought processes are not the processes of judgment; the judgments are neither true nor false. Nor can there be any new thought or philosophy under the sun.¹ All our thoughts are necessarily and wholly determined by antecedent thoughts and previous philosophies. There is no freedom for thought. Thought is fettered in mechanical and fixed relations. Secondly, a man's actions, being fixed and determined, it is not in any way justifiable to demand from him moral standards and to impose upon him social and political injunctions. Morality is, therefore, a delusion, for it is not open to the choice of man to accept it or act according to it. Our actions, like our motives are determined and necessitated.

Now, whatever the psychologists may say to the contrary, thought is essentially not mechanical.² Even accepting for argument's sake that it is causally related with sensations, feelings and perceptions, there is a judging self over and above these feelings and perceptions.³ It looks upon them as if from above. It feels itself free to choose this way or that. The thinking subject is free. This is the basic assumption of all knowledge. Without this assumption knowledge itself will be impossible and the search

¹ M. P., p. 36.

² I., pp. 101-102.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

for truth a mere mockery. Again one thought may lead to, and affect, another thought, but the relation between these two is not that of necessity.¹ The judging self is free to accept, reject or appropriate the thought of others. It judges it as if it is a judge, impartially and freely. Our philosophies like our judgments, are expressions of our free choice and free-will. No thought can appeal to us unless our will approves of it. Our will plays an important role in our thought constructions and philosophies.² The will is the core of our personality. It is the ego at work. Therefore, it is the ego which evaluates thought. And this evaluation is free.

Further, the mere fact of purposive activity in our life shows that we are not impelled by forces that may push us from behind; we consciously move towards the future.³ All our activity is teleological. Our life is a life of purposive activity. But it may be maintained that the magnetic power of purpose drags us towards itself as is under compulsion and necessity. In that case it would be a sort of inverse causality which would not leave a place for freedom. But firstly, the purpose or the end is of our own giving.⁴ We ourselves place before ourselves an ideal and an end. The ego incessantly places before itself the object of new desires and new purposes. The choice

¹ M. P., p. 96.

² Iqbal's treatment of the 'Metaphysics of Persia' is wholly dependent upon this principal. See Intro., and Chap. V of that book.

³ L., p. 102.

⁴ *Ibid*,

of ends is dependent upon the ego itself and upon nothing else. Secondly, in our actions and aspirations, whether they be moral or non-moral, we directly become conscious of our own personal causality.¹ We know, when we will, that it is we who are willing. Freedom thus can be directly intuited. It is directly felt in our being active and aspirant. It is, therefore, not a postulate which we assume to make morality possible, as Kant thought, but a fact of human consciousness itself. By intuition we descend into the deep recesses of our own self and directly apprehend it to be active and free. Freedom thus is not an inference. The ego directly apprehends itself to be an efficient cause and not dependent upon any other factor.

Indeed mechanical causality does not explain the phenomena of life at all; it does not explain self-maintenance and reproduction, as Haldane points out. Even in the sphere of physical being, it is a convenient invention of the Ego to grasp its connections. It is not a final truth. We do not know why an event is connected with another event. But the ego has to live in conditions which obstruct and hamper its activity and freedom. It is only by mastering these conditions that the ego can maintain its free activity. Thought, therefore, dissects the world into so many artificial units of phenomena, and must grasp them as connected. This affords us a masterful

¹ L , p. 102.

control of these conditions and the ego is able to maintain its unhampered movement.¹ Hence it is that thought also is an indirect means to freedom. This remark is amplified by the obvious difference between the animal and the human world. The animals, being divested of thought, accept the material conditions as they are and pass their life in accordance with the limitations and necessities imposed upon them. But they too have got a relative freedom of movement, of assent to, and dissent from, their environment. Man, though also living in an environment which seems to be given to him, however, has the power to hammer it according to his own will. His freedom is manifested in his actions; and every act of his transforms and trims the phenomena. If, however, his freedom is obstructed in the material conditions, he has the power to devote himself to his own self.² Obstruction and hindrance to our activity, therefore, sharpens the insight and the power of the ego. This makes us self-conscious, and helps us to find in the deep recesses of our own heart a free cause and a free personality.

To say that the Quranic idea of Destiny and Fate goes against freedom,³ is not true, for Destiny is not the fixed programme for the Ego. The Ego is free to choose and to act. Destiny is the inward reach of the Ego.⁴ The Ego is limited by its inner

¹ L., p. 102.

² *Ibid*, p. 11.

³ "All things we have created with a fixed destiny." (Q, 54-50)

⁴ L., p. 47.

possibilities. Limitation, however, does not necessarily impose determinism upon us. The Ego is free within its possibilities.

The Ego is not only free; it is immortal; and this it is, Iqbal tends to hold, what intuition tells us. Now, immortality has been conceived in various ways. Ibn Rushd conceived Intellect as universal and eternal. It transcends individuality. Hence Intellect, which appears in finite persons, never suffers death.¹ But this, in fact, is the immortality of the human race rather than of the individual.²

Nietzsche bases his case for immortality on the scientific hypothesis that energy is never lost. The world is a closed off unity in which there can be no dissipation of energy. The amount of energy being fixed, various combinations of energy-centres recur again and again. Death cannot cause the dissipation of energy. It only means that various energy centres have lost their unity only to recur again after an interval of time. This is Nietzsche's doctrine of Eternal Recurrence.³ But this immortality is "intolerable".⁴ It is energy and the process of its eternal recurrence in finite centres that is to be regarded as immortal, and not 'I' and 'You'. This argument is of the same nature as that of Ibn Rushd, whereby intellect was regarded as universal and immortal and its manifestation in the finite ego as temporary phase of its existence.

¹ P. I, pp. 194-95.

² W. P., Vol. ii, Sec., 1066, p. 430.

³ L., p. 106.

⁴ L., p. 109.

Similar is the case with the *Elan* of Bergson which is the universal principle of all existence.¹ The *Elan* or Life is incessantly manifesting itself in ever new forms and shapes, individuals and persons. The latter vanish after some time, but with the cessation of these forms there is no cessation or loss to life itself. Life is endless and eternal. It is a continuous and unbreakable process of new manifestations and activities. But this proves the immortality of Life and not of individual persons. It is not personal immortality, which we were seeking.

Kant too affirms personal immortality. His argument is mainly ethical. He thinks that the moral agent should pursue the greatest good which comprises of two heterogeneous elements, perfect virtue and perfect happiness. The realisation thereof, however, is not possible in this short span of life. Accordingly, we must postulate immortality, *i.e.*, permanent existence and infinite progress for the individual. This immortality is of course personal. But the argument is based upon the assumption that the consummation of virtue and happiness is "somehow" possible.² Even so, it is not clear why this harmony should take infinite time.³ This consumma-

¹ Iqbal had been himself for sometime in his earlier pantheistic thought holding this very position. See B D., pp 292-93, etc.

² L., p 107.

³ Kant does not base immortality on the Greatest Good, but on the supreme Good, *viz.*, Moral perfection. However the criticism of Iqbal refers to it equally.

tion of perfect virtue with perfect happiness, if it were to happen at all, will definitely happen at some point in the future; and that means that infinite time is not required for such a consummation; and consequently the soul need not be immortal.

In moments of great decision and action, however, the ego directly apprehends itself to be self-determining and free. It has a direct and unshakeable intuition of its own free causality and movement. It is thus to be classed beyond the categories of time and space, which make us see things in mechanical and necessary relations.¹ Time in the physics is synonymous with space. One event follows another; and time is nothing beyond this serial relation. This makes every event fixed and necessary. It even postulates our self to be strictly determined, for according to the serial character of time every feeling and thought appears to be a necessary outcome of its antecedents. But in the intuition of our own self we find that there is another time which is not serial in its nature. It is, as Bergson calls it, pure Duration—succession without change. It is pure movement. We can apprehend this pure movement by observing our own inner self. Herein we find that the ego at work is, of itself, constantly moving, doing, and desiring. It is a free agent and is determining itself freely by its aspirations and ideals. This free movement towards the realisation of high ideals and aspirations

¹ L., p. 45.

makes it feel that it is a permanent element in the scale of being and existence.¹ Action then confers on us the intuition that the self is immortal. We can have a peep into our immortality even in this life of ours and that through intuition.²

But here Iqbal makes a reservation. There are egos in which the consciousness of egohood flickers only dimly. They are, therefore, not able to peep into the deep recesses of their own heart. They do not, accordingly, feel themselves as self-determined and progressing towards permanent existence. They wither and vanish like the odour of a flower in the desert air. Immortality, therefore, is "not ours by right. It is to be achieved by personal effort."³ In our actions we grow and strengthen our consciousness of our own self. Further, it is through action alone that we can perfect ourselves as immortal. In action

¹ S S , p. xxiii.

² Iqbal seems to hold that the question of immortality belongs to the sphere of religion rather than to that of metaphysics or ethics. Hence he bases the arguments for immortality mainly upon the Quran

The Quran says that the human ego whose evolution has taken so many years cannot be thrown away like a dead leaf (See Q , 75-36). This shows that man has got infinite possibilities of growth. Further, Quran mentions a state of Barzakh (See Q., 101, 102). This can mean a state of consciousness characterised by a change in the ego's attitude towards time and space. Our present view of time and space is dependent upon our present bodily structure. With the dissolution of this structure, a change in the view-point of time and space must also follow and we may pass from state to state (See Q , 84 : 90) and be immortal. . . . Moreover, Quran maintains resurrection. That is possible only of single individuals (See Q 19, 95) This involves that our finite existence is not vapoury. It is there to require the approach to the Infinite by the finite individual.

³ L , p. 118.

we intuit ourself to be immortal. We have a direct intuition of immortality. This feeling of 'Ahung' of immortality is deepened and dilated by action and struggle.

IV

THE MATERIAL WORLD

The external world exists. It exists and is real. Our perceptions reveal to us reality, a reality that cannot be denied. Indeed, Iqbal would go further; not only in perception, but in every kind of knowledge the knowing subject always has, over against him, an objective reality. The duality of subject and object is a necessity of all knowledge.

Moreover, activity and effort is a stubborn fact of our consciousness. But in all action and effort we feel ourselves hampered by something over against us. The life of the ego consists in the mutual contention of the ego invading the environment and the environment invading the ego.¹ The existence of the environment or the external world is thus involved in it.

But what is its essential nature? The physicist on the basis of observation and experiment holds that its nature is material. It is made up of small, hard and inert substances existing in a void, called space. These substances are atoms—small, impenetrable and indivisible physical entities. Things are combinations of atoms. Nothing but atoms really exist. All else is only transitory.

¹ L., pp. 12, 97.

But this view of the nature of physical reality is, urges Iqbal, untenable. It is based on the attribution of substantiality to things which, as Berkeley¹ showed, cannot be maintained. The old view of the material world, which descended from Aristotle, was that it is a finished product, situated in a vacuum, called space. This makes the world to be fixed and incapable of growth. But, as the Einsteinian physics has demonstrated, this conception is false. Will space remain, as it is, if all objects are taken away out of it? No, it will definitely shrink to a point. Space, therefore, is not an objective reality. The unreality of space implies the unreality of fixed substances lying in it. The fixed materiality of the classical physics thus evaporates. Matter is not a persistent thing lying in space. It is only "a system of inter-related events,"² as Einstein would say, or as an "organism"³ as Whitehead would have it.

The world then is not a complex of inert atoms

¹ Locke divided qualities of physical things into two groups, primary and secondary. The primary qualities, *e.g.*, solidity, extension, figure etc., inhere in the objects themselves. The secondary qualities, colours, sounds, tastes etc., do not; they are only subjective.

Berkeley pointed out that the distinction is arbitrary. If the secondary qualities, *i.e.*, colours, taste, and sound etc., are subjective, the primary qualities too are subjective, they cannot be extricated out of the secondary. With the primary qualities goes the material substance which they constituted. Indeed, the notion of a material substance is altogether futile, we have no ground to maintain it. The external world does not exist.

Iqbal, however, does not, like Berkeley, deny the existence of the external world. He denies the substantiality of objects; he agrees with Einstein who destroys, not the objectivity of nature, but the view of substance as simple location in space.

² *L.*, p. 86.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

existing in space. But what is then the positive nature of matter? We have so far followed the objective method of the scientists. It has failed firstly, because it deals with more sense-perception. By its help and guidance we have only learnt to move round the objects. We have not so far been able to enter into the depths of their being. Secondly, it has divided the world of experience into an irreducible duality, the perceiver and the perceived. Iqbal would not have it. Here his thought has a close affinity with the thought of Bergson. The nature of matter, according to both, can be revealed neither by sense-perception nor by thought. Thought too, like sense-perception, assumes reality to be static and fixed.¹ All the rationalistic philosophies, since the days of Aristotle, have regarded the universe as a permanent and solid block. Even the categories of change and movement, which have from time to time been applied to the universe, assume that the universe is of a fixed behaviour and of a determined character. The idea of causality, applied in physics, amply proves it. The essence of causality is that the antecedents and the consequents are mutually predetermined.² All philosophies, therefore, as Bergson points out, have started with a natural prejudice about the nature of the universe. All

¹ L., p. 49.

² This reasoning, though not explicit, is yet, it seems to me, implicit in Iqbal when he says that "the conception of cause, the essential feature of which is priority to the effect, is relative to the subject matter of science". See L., pp. 49, 185.

metaphysics suffers from the defect that its enquiry is the predetermined journey for the search of the fixed, the static and the permanent.

We must, therefore, start with the subject and its experience. That we know first hand. We know it by intuition. The subject must start on his enquiry as to the nature of the object or the material world from its own self; and it can make a headway only by conceiving matter on its own analogy. The unknown can be known on the analogy of the known.

Bergson would claim the knowledge of matter by intuition.¹ Iqbal differs. Intuition, according to Bergson, is made accessible to us firstly, by taking a recourse to pure-perception unadulterated by memory, which is more nearly approximated according as a descent is made in the animal kingdom, for in case of man it is overlaid with memory elements. Secondly, local changes in bodies have to be rejected, for the latter as such do not exist at all;² and consequently, objects must not be regarded as distinct entities. Hence in the act of intuition of matter, the figures, magnitudes, and position of bodies melt away, and what remains may be described as a "living continuity". Thus we must get into complete union and sympathy with matter by relaxing into inertia and pure-perception. But this will eventually involve the forgetfulness of everything even that of "I-am-ness". To Iqbal, however, this stage is not realisable.

¹ C. E , p. 251

² M M , pp. 268-69.

Moreover, it is not at all a stage for which we should yearn. Iqbal emphasises a bold affirmation of the ego, rather than its absorption in any other reality whether it be higher or lower. He must, therefore, leave the Bergsonian intuition alone. As he does not here claim intuition, in his own sense of the word, he must have recourse to analogy¹ in determining the nature of the material world.

Now what do we find when we intuit the self. In the words of Bergson "I am warm or cold. I am merry or sad. I work or do nothing. I look at what is around me or I think of something else. Sensations, feelings, volitions, ideas,—such are the changes into which my existence is divided and which colour it in turn. I change then without ceasing."² Now the very word change implies in itself the idea of time. Change is only possible in time. The intuition of self does verify this remark.

The time, of which people talk in their ordinary discourse, is not the real time. It is as Newton describes it "absolute, true, and mathematical time which in itself, and from its own nature flows equally without any relation to anything external." We measure it through the concepts of past, present and future. An event or a thing either has been in the past, or lies in the present, or will happen in some future. This amounts to saying that a thing or an event is 'now' or 'not-now', Indeed, this time

¹ L., pp. 44, 48.

² C.E., p. 1.

is made up of so many discrete 'nows'. We think of it as a line in space. The 'nows' and 'not-nows' are really 'heres' and 'not-heres' in it. It is serial time.

But if we close our eyes from the world and fix it on our self we observe that there is in us a "constant flux which is not comparable to any flux I have ever seen. There is a succession of states each of which announces that which follows and contains that which precedes it. They are profoundly animated with a common life and it cannot be pointed out where any one of them finished or where another commenced." ¹ In reality no one of them begins or ends but all extend into each other. There is, therefore, a change without succession. Bergson calls it Duration.

This view of time is wholly qualitative and is, as Iqbal points out, peculiar to our inner self which in his own words is the "Appreciative Self". Thus, "the time of the appreciative self is a single 'now', which the intellectual or the efficient self, in its traffic with the world of space pulverises into a series of 'nows', like the pearl beads in a thread. Here is then pure duration unadulterated by space." ² In it the past, the present and the future form an organic unity. All is given simultaneously. All impulses, desires and hopes are constantly growing and forming a unity of flux and change. We do not here meet the mechanical and the necessary phenomena, but a free

¹ I. M., pp. 9, 10.

² L., p. 47.

and a variable personality which is without a break creating for itself new objectives, hopes and aspirations. This dynamic personality or ego, is highly creative in its essential nature.

‘On the analogy of the self it may now be maintained that the physical world too exist in time.’¹ But time is the peculiar possession of a self only. The world must then, accordingly, be regarded as a unique self. It is, as Whitehead would say, like an organism rather than a static block of substance² Therefore, the nature of the material world is that of the self; it is life. It is in a constant flux and change. Reality is not static.³ No two moments in the life of reality resemble each other. There is a constant activity, action and movement. Indeed the nature of life is pure action and movement. The material crust or body is not at all necessary for it.⁴ Indeed it is the outward manifestation of life that needs a body and not life itself. This thesis is confirmed by modern physics also. The nature of an atom, according to it, is not something electrified but electricity. Life is a metaphysical entity. It is *Elan Vital*.

But is life only movement? According to Nietzsche the essential nature of life is incessant activity. It is best manifested in our impulses. An impulse in its developed form is commonly described as “will”. Now “if the application of the term ‘will’ be extended as to cover all forms of impulses,

¹ L, p. 44.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 36, 37.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

⁴ *Ibid.*

from the lowest to the highest, then the nature of life is best manifested in 'will'." Schopenhaur, Nietzsche, and Bergson all agree on this.

Bergson maintains that this will is mere will-to-live. But this is not satisfactory, finds Iqbal. For all our life is teleologically determined. We choose for ourselves new hopes, new ideals, and new aspirations. But all ideals involve thought and intelligence. This proves that the self is not only will; it is woven with the warp and woof of will and thought. Thought, however, is not opposed to will. In our active life thought, will and purpose all intertwine and form an organic unity.¹

Again, in the human self the impulse to live is a negligible phenomena. The latter is a possession of the lower life only. In man it is replaced by the will-to-live-well. This circumstance is amply proved by the fact that man is always ready to take great risks. If mere life would have been the end, hazardous enterprises would have been impossible.² Risks are taken not to preserve life, but to better life. Life itself is, sometimes, sacrificed for the latter. Better life can be defined with various concepts. Nietzsche defines it as will-to-power.³ "The love of power is the daemon of mankind. You may give men everything possible—health, food, shelter, enjoyment; but they are, and for ever remain, unhappy and capricious,

¹ L. pp 50, 51, 52.

² See 'Zindagi', B D, pp 292-323, further P. M., pp. 33, 40, 143, 145, etc.

³ W. p., Vol. II, Sec., 686, p. 121.

for the daemon waits and waits and must be satisfied. Let everything else be taken away from them; but let the daemon be satisfied, and then they will be as happy as men and daemons can be.”¹ There is in us an incessant desire to ascend to higher and still higher desires and perfections; we are constantly tending towards higher aspirations. It is the nature of life to grow and extend itself. Every centre of impulse strives to become master of all space, to extend its power and to thrust back that which resists it. But since it is constantly met by similar endeavours on the part of others, it comes to terms with them, that is, it combines with those who are sufficiently related to it in order to conspire for power together.² “The world”, then, “is the will-to-power, and nothing else.”³

For Nietzsche Power is the only value. Religion, morality, art and science are all means to this one end—to attain power. Iqbal would not go the whole length with Nietzsche. For there are for man also other values than mere power, *e.g.*, love. Love is not necessarily the love of power. Nor is it identical with power, for power may be destructive. Further, the phenomena of growth and expansion of the self is accompanied by a collateral process of its intensification. The will-to-power, therefore, is not an end in itself; it is only one of the means to a further end,

¹ D. D., Sec., 263, p. 248.

² W. P., Vol. II, Sec., 636, p. 121.

³ *Ibid.*, Sec., 1067, p. 432.

viz., the intensification of life, the Will-to-Egohood.¹ That is fundamental. The will-to-power, like all healthy activities of the self perfects our egohood. But an undue emphasis on the will-to-power tends to shatter the all round growth and unity of the ego.²

Egohood is, therefore, the end to which all our activities point or rather should lead. "The idea of personality gives us a standard of value." Indeed, it settles the problem of good and evil. That which fortifies personality is good, that which weakens it is bad. Art, religion and ethics must be judged from the stand-point of personality,³ and not by the criterion of the will-to-power. But egohood is not only in the end; it is also in the beginning. Our activity, life, desires and aspirations are all made possible only because our life is an ego. All life must take place in the finite centres and wear the form of finite 'this-ness'.⁴ The will-to-power of Nietzsche and the impulse to live of Bergson are meaningful utterances, because of the finite centres of experience.

On the analogy of self there is then, in the whole universe, according to Iqbal, a tendency to individuate and to grow as an individual.⁵ The highest form of it is the ego, in which the individual becomes a self-contained exclusive centre. The world, in all its

¹ The responsibility of this term is mine.

² A. K., pp 44-58, 18, etc.

⁴ S. S., Intro, p xvi.

³ S. S., Intro., p. xxii.

⁵ B. J., p. 79.

details, from the mechanical, of what we call the atom of matter to the free movement in the human ego, in the self-revelation of the 'Great-I-am'. Every atom how-so-ever low in the scale of existence, is an ego. "Throughout the entire gamut of being runs the gradually rising note of egohood until it reaches its perfection in man."¹

Having determined the essential nature of the physical thing we may now raise the question: is body necessary for the ego as many have held. The reply is in the negative. This question of the necessity of the body for the ego arises out of a partial and confusing definition of matter itself. There is no fixed, static and inert matter, as the atomists would

¹ This position of Iqbal resembles very much that of Leibniz. The latter regarded the universe as of the nature of force, and further, he maintained that this force manifests itself in force units, which he called Monads. But still there is between Iqbal and Leibniz a great difference. The latter regard the nature of the universe revealed in force rather than in life. Life is something more than force. Leibniz, however, does sometimes speak of volition and will, but this he never puts as a basis of the Monad (He is vague, rather very "vague" regarding this point. See P.M., pp. 139). For Iqbal, on the contrary, the essential nature of the universe is that of volition, will and thought. In this, as we have seen above, he has improved on Bergson also. He does not regard thought as essentially opposed to will. His, therefore, is the voluntaristic conception of the universe while Leibniz has confined himself to the physical category of force.

And further, Monad for Leibniz, is like the atom of the physicists with the difference that it is a force atom, rather than a material one. But *materia prima* is an inevitable necessity for a Monad. Even God cannot deprive it of *materia prima*, without which it would be *actus purus*, i.e., God Himself (P.L., p. 144). "God, however, could deprive a Monad of *materia secundas* i.e. of the assemblage of Monads which constitute its body." Ego, for Iqbal, however, is not at all material. Egohood is to be regarded as a tendency towards an individual and self-conscious life. Material crust is necessary not for life, but for its manifestation.

have it. Spirit or the Elan is the absolute reality. But it has a tendency to individuate and centralise itself. Accordingly, it manifests itself in body and mind.¹ Mind, by virtue of its peculiar property of self-consciousness, is the hitherto best known manifestation of the Will-to-individuate and grow as an ego. But body also is fundamentally the same will. Only it is a "combination of the sub-egos."² Therefore, the two, *viz.*, mind and body do not vitally differ. Indeed, the mind emerges from the lower colonies of the sub-egos, called body. Both belong to one system.³ The body makes the emergence of mind possible. We are thus led to a spiritual Monism.

Now egos grow, change, and ascend to higher levels of self-consciousness by increasing acts of tension, aspiration and hope. Relaxation and lethargy on the other hand go to destroy this self-contained unity. With this is connected a significant point. Iqbal affirms teleology while Nietzsche and Bergson do not. To Nietzsche the world has no pre-determined purpose; it tends towards no goal.⁴ "The universe is a circular movement which has already repeated itself an infinite number of times, and which plays its game for all eternity."⁵ But according to Nietzsche himself, its essence is the will-to-power, and the will-to-power is essentially creative. The world is "a self-generating work of art."⁶ Eternal

¹ Z. A , pp. 216-17.

² L., p. 100.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

⁴ W. P., Vol. II, Sec , 515, p. 30.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Sec. 1066, p. 430.

⁶ *Ibid* , Sec., 617, p. 108 ; and again Sec., 1059, p. 424.

repetition is not eternal becoming. It is the same old idea of being, masquerading as becoming.¹

Teleology, according to Bergson, makes time unreal and "useless".² "The portals of the future must remain wide open" to reality,³ otherwise it will not be free and creative. The Elan Vital is not arriving at a result. "It is wholly arbitrary, undirected, chaotic and unforeseeable in its behaviour." Reality is of the nature of a free creative impulse. The very word impulse shows that it is blind and undetermined force, storming, and for ever changing. Teleology, however, by fixing an end to reality would make free creativeness a mere delusion. Iqbal fully agrees with Bergson so far. "No doubt, if teleology means the working out of a plan in view of a predetermined end or goal, it does make time unreal. All is already given somewhere in eternity; the temporal order of events is nothing more than a mere repetition of the eternal mould."⁴ According to this view of teleology, events do not happen, we simply meet them. All is fixed and pre-determined. There is in the world no free creation and growth. What appears to us as creation, is, in the end, pre-determined and pre-ordained, and further we are like the puppets moving on the stage as if through a pull from behind the screen, which, however, we do not see. The difference between this conception of teleology and the mechanical causality, lies only in this that the latter impels

¹ L., p. 177.

² C. E., p. 41.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 110.

⁴ L., p. 52.

us from behind while the former drags us to itself from before.

But Iqbal points out that there is yet another sense of teleology. It is revealed to us when we analyse our own consciousness. Our life, as our direct experience tells us, is determined by our desires, purposes, and ends, which are, however, of our own giving. "Though there is no far-off distant goal towards which we are moving, there is a progressive formation of fresh ends, purposes and ideal scale of value as the process of life grows and expands. We become by ceasing to be what we are; life is a passage through a series of death.¹ But when we stand in the end, and retrospect our life from a particular point, we find that we have become what we have become by being determined by a definite end which we did not foresee in the least. We constantly create our ends and purposes and we know ourselves as free agents in doing so; but this varying and free choice of ends itself leads us to a final state. To regard the latter as given is to set at naught the very conception of freedom in life. Bergson could not adequately analyse our inner nature, for he tried to analyse it on the analogy of the lower beings. But there, too, there are sub-conscious ends and purposes; while in human activity they are conscious. "The ends and purposes, whether they exist as conscious or sub-conscious tendencies form the warp and woof of our

¹ L., p. 52.

conscious experience. And the notions of end cannot be understood except in reference to a future.”¹ Thus Iqbal leaves the “portals of future” wide open to reality, though he accepts teleology.

The universe then, on the analogy of our own self is of a free creative character. It is of the nature of life. All life, however, is free, creative and original. The universe, therefore, is a constantly growing universe which is bursting and burgeoning at every instant. More. It is an organic unity of will, thought and purpose.² Our universe, therefore, is not “chaotic, false, cruel, contradictory and seductive.”³ It has a “reason and a plan” both. It is definitely tending to an end; but that end is, and will ever remain, for us in the future. There is, therefore, no final state to the universe. It is a constantly progressing, self-generating and self-evolving universe, whose inner possibilities of growth and evolution will never know any limits.⁴

¹ L , pp 55, 51.

³ W. P., Vol., ii, Sec., 528, p. 38.

² *Ibid* , p. 20.

⁴ L., p. 54.

V

THE ABSOLUTE OR GOD

The universe is, as indicated in the last chapter, of the nature of a free creative will. The will is at the bottom of all existence. It is bursting and bubbling in phenomena. It is manifesting itself in all reality. There is no force and impulsion from behind it. It is not subject to any compulsive law, for then it would not be creative at all.

Now this free and creative will can be conceived in two ways. Either it is a blind force, having no purpose before it; or it is purposive, determining its creation with a view to an end.

But the hypothesis of a blind force is open to doubt on two grounds. Firstly, the world, as we know it, is not "a chaotic and contradictory" jumble. It is so far as we can see a teleological and rational whole. It has a reason and a rhyme. It is a universe in which reigns law and order¹. Secondly, the facts of our consciousness too point in the same direction. Our life is not chaotic. It is definitely determined by ends. All human activity is purposive. We must, consequently, accept the second alternative. The universe must be conceived to be in essence as a

¹ L, p. 9.

“rationally directed creative life.”¹ But is then the world directed by a Being outside it, or is it itself a Self intelligent and purposeful ?

The first hypothesis is untenable, because firstly the end in that case shall have to be super-imposed on the world.² This makes all creative freedom in the universe a mere illusion, for the end is already given and given from outside and the universe is determined by it. Secondly, this Being himself will not be the creator of the material which he is guiding and directing.³ He would, therefore, be a mere contriver. Thirdly, even if He were, somehow, the creator of matter, it clashes with His wisdom to have created His own difficulties by creating a matter over and above Him.⁴

Therefore, the hypothesis of a Being outside the world who has allotted a definite end to the universe is not tenable. Thus we are driven to the second alternative, *viz.*, that the universe itself is a Self or an Ego.⁵ This hypothesis is amply justified by the experience of our own self. Our life is the life of an ego. It is not a mere flow of consciousness, it has a centre. Indeed all life is individual in its character. Everywhere there is a will-to-egohood.⁶ There is a gradual rising note of egohood throughout the universe until it reaches its relative perfection in man. This is not all. We are further driven to the existence

¹ L., p. 58.

⁴ *Ibid.*

² *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

³ *Ibid.*

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 69.

of an all-comprehensive ego.¹ For the universe as a whole should be regarded as an ego. The universe possesses a 'will'; and the will being purposive, the universe too, must be supposed to be purposive. This is possible only if the universe itself is taken to be an ego. Now the essence of egohood lies in its private circuit of individuality,² and the essential nature of individuality in its directive function.³ Egohood, therefore, is a point of reference. Accordingly the universe as such should not be regarded as a mere flow of events,⁴ but as possessing a centre of reference, *viz.*, an egohood.⁵

¹ L., p. 53.

² *Ibid.*, p. 94.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 97.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 88.

⁵ A Note on Iqbal and Bergson.

This reasoning and the conclusion to which it has led, eminently distinguishes Iqbal from Bergson. To Bergson the creative force is a mere blind will. He calls it *Elan Vital* Impetus or the will-to-live (C. E., p. 92). It is free and creative. It is of the type of incessant movement and activity. Further, it is the only reality according to him (C. E., p. 92). The multiple phenomena are its manifestation. It manifests itself in nature as well as in man. But its activity is, according to him, hampered by another reality which is of the nature of passivity, fixity, and dullness. This he calls matter. But matter itself, it must be noted, is, according to him, not a mere passive and dull reality. It has not reached that extent. It is only relatively passive and motionless. Accordingly it too has in itself a principle of motion and life. (Matter for Bergson is the *inversion* of the principle of life; C. E., pp. 258-64).

Now *Elan Vital*, in order to overcome the relative passivity and inactivity of matter, has manifested itself in various ways. It has organised itself into bodies which are, in fact, more free than the pure unorganised and inert matter. A body does admit in itself the principle of movement and action. But this relative activity and freedom is more comprehensively achieved in the human body, which unflinchingly refutes the necessity of matter and the principle of mechanical action and reaction. Again consciousness and the human personalities too, are a means of freedom for the *Elan*. Consciousness, too serves the activity. Consciousness, therefore, by itself is not the end. It is helpful to us as a means to activity and life. Life and activity, therefore, are higher than the category of consciousness. Consciousness vanishes when

Iqbal thus parts company with pantheism. The question therefore arises what is the relation of the Ultimate Ego with the finite egos.

This relation can be conceived in three ways:—

(1) The Ultimate Ego is the only reality and the finite egos are absorbed in it. They have no existence apart from the Ultimate Ego which alone is real.

(2) The Ultimate Ego holds the finite egos in its own self, without obliterating their existence.

(3) The Ultimate Ego may be regarded as apart and above the finite egos.

It has helped our activity. In the life of pure activity and will, there is accordingly, no need of consciousness. Elan or the principle of activity, therefore is supra-conscious. Again, our personalities and selves, too, are a means of freedom for the elan. The elan is supra-personal or impersonal. Selfhood, therefore, is not an end in itself (*Cf. C E*, pp 83, 84). It is a means to attain freedom for the elan. Moreover, selfhood is a temporary phase of the elan. It is a mere non-existent reality, for it does not exist besides the elan. It is a mere transitory form which the elan has accepted for itself.

Iqbal on the contrary, regards the creative will as essentially of the nature of thought and intelligence, and not a blind and whimsical force, as Bergson would have it. And again, for Bergson the individualities and the human personalities too are mere long shadows of the elan. They are according to him not at all real and existent by themselves. Iqbal, however, has an unflinching faith in the existent reality of the egos. The egos may be, as Bergson would have it, the manifestations of the elan, but they are not unreal and mere shadows (*L*, p 58). They are existent and real by themselves. Individuality is the core of all life. Life is not a mere sweeping wave. Its essential nature lies in egohood. Bergson emphasised its activity and moving aspect only. This he called pure Duration. But there can be, as Iqbal points out, no conception of duration without a self. Self or Ego is prior to time and space (*L*, p 53). It is an ego alone that can apprehend its activity in time and space. Accordingly, Iqbal places the Elan under the higher category of Selfhood, which in accordance with his terminology may here be called as the Ultimate Ego. For Bergson the elan for ever remains the ultimate reality. His position regarding the ultimate reality, therefore, for ever remains absolutely pantheistic. Iqbal's position, however, is not so.

Iqbal rejects the last position outright.¹ It creates a gulf between the finite and the infinite. "The infinite reached by contradicting the finite is a false infinite, which neither explains itself nor the finite which is thus made to stand in opposition to the Infinite."²

The first position attributes personality and egohood to Ultimate Reality. It is a positive advance on those pantheistic modes of thought which regard the ultimate nature of reality as that of an impersonal character, *e.g.*, light, force, life, will, thought or reason etc.³ However, it is still stuck in pantheism: for nothing exists but the Ultimate Ego. The finite egos are absorbed and submerged in it, and as such they have no being of their own. Iqbal rejects this position too. For firstly, the intuition of the self reveals to us that the self has a being of its own.⁴ It is conscious of its being and it is conscious of its freedom. It is not determined by any external force, *e.g.*, a higher Ego. Its activity is essentially determined by ends and purposes which are of its own giving. Its being is, moreover, eternal. Free activity gives a clue to its immortality. Secondly, we cannot accept that all that is best and beautiful in our life is of no value and no worth.⁵ Is my life a result of a mere creative sport? And, is this true also of humanity at large? Certainly not. The facts of life point to a constant progress and evolution in the realm of biology.⁶ The biologist,

¹ L., p. 28.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 27, 28.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 93. See Chap. III.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 115.

however, contents himself to postulate that man is the final link of the evolutionary process. But this supposition is unwarranted. Man has grown out of the lower life and it is a mistake to end the evolutionary process with him. There is no end to evolution. Progress is a relative term and it knows no bounds. Moreover, if it be supposed that men and the universe have reached their final point of evolution, it would make our life and existence unbearable and without any effort and aspiration. Eternal perfection, or even eternal recurrence of that perfection, such as that of Nietzsche, makes our universe and our life fixed and determined for ever.¹ But the facts of growth and the possibility of creation are amply proved by the observation of nature and self. Is all this unreal? No.

Thirdly, the experience, on which pantheists base their case, is open to doubt on their own grounds. The Mujaddid² questions its validity on the basis of mystic experience itself. The Ultimate Reality revealed by it is according to him essentially personal³ It is not an impersonal being, like force, will, light, etc. It is self-conscious. We know it by the fact of its response. The Ultimate Self is not deaf to our call and blind to our feelings and thoughts. Further, the intuition of the Ultimate Reality does not lead to the obliteration of our own selfhood. In the actual act of intuition, however, the private personality of the

¹ L., p. 177.

² Sheikh Ahmad Sirhindi, generally called as Mujaddid-i-Alf-i-Thani.

³ L., p. 18, 61, 74.

subject of experience is momentarily "supressed". But that does, in no way, mean its total effacement and extinction. Therefore, the mystics are wrong in holding that in the act of intuition the knower and the known are one. This, as a matter of fact, never happens. The known is always apart from and other than the knower.¹ In Intuition, however, there is a sense in which the knower is one with the known. The mystic because of his extreme love and emotion for God, is totally absorbed in the thought of God. This leads him to attribute to himself a relative or a total non-existence in accordance with the varying intensity of his feelings. He is actually absorbed and submerged in the ultimate ego. But this absorption is only emotional and not existential. Further, as the Mujaddid points out, there are grades of this intuition.² The mystics content themselves to the preliminary stages. At these stages, they find that the finite self is altogether non-existent and unreal. This feeling and consciousness does actually possess the mystic.³ But he is wrong in so far as he muses upon this experience as the final stage. Indeed, there are many stages of direct experience; and the final stage is one in which the mystic confronts God as a real being standing over against the ultimate real.⁴ It leads to a bold affirmation of human personality and not to its negation and extinction.⁵

¹ L , pp. 12, 111, 112, 182, 193.

² M. T , pp. 82, 101, 102-6.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ L., p. 179.

⁵ *Ibid.*

Thus we are led to the second alternative, *viz.*, that finite selves are real and existent. How then, arises the question, does the Ultimate Ego hold the finite egos in 'its own self without obliterating their existence? This is possible in two ways. Either the Ultimate Ego holds the finite egos in His Imagination; or He holds them in His Being.

The first alternative is Panentheistic. Iqbal would not hold; it is not justified by the facts of our experience of our own self.¹ The human ego, if regarded as a creation of the imagination of God only, would be lifeless and no more than imaginary. And again, if it were, somehow, to have some life or activity, all its life and activity would be strictly determined by the imagination of God and not by itself.² In no way, therefore, it can be assumed to be real and existent by itself. An existential finite ego is totally different from the image of an existential finite ego.

Therefore, we must hold that the Ultimate Ego holds the finite egos in His own Being without obliterating their existence. The Ultimate Reality must be regarded as of the nature of the self. But further this self does not lie apart from the universe, as if separated by a space lying between Him and

¹ Iqbal himself does not seem to have had the intuition of God. He never claims it. He, however, claims the intuition of self

² Iqbal himself has not attempted to criticise or evaluate Panentheism. This, however, is necessary deduction from Iqbal's thought.

ourselves.¹ The Ultimate Self, therefore, is not transcendent, as is conceived by the anthropomorphic theists. He is immanent, for He comprehends and encompasses the whole universe.² But He is not immanent in the sense of the pantheists of the traditional type, because He is a personal and not an impersonal reality. He has an egohood, *i.e.*, consciousness of His own "I-am-ness" like us.³ But His "I-am-ness" does not lie within the grasp of our experience. He is, therefore, transcendent. He is in short immanent and transcendent both, and yet neither the one nor the other. Both immanence and transcendence are true of the Ultimate Reality.⁴ But Iqbal emphasises the transcendence of the Ultimate Ego, rather than His immanence.

Firstly, immanence is associated with the pantheistic trend of thought. It directly leads one to imagine that the human self is non-existent and unreal. But the human self is not unreal. It has its own being apart from the Ultimate Ego. This mutual unity and this mutual separation of the finite and the Infinite must be firmly grasped. But an emphasis on immanence would directly absorb and dissolve the human ego in the Infinite. This would be like giving up the reality of the self, on which falls the whole emphasis of Iqbal's thought and philosophy. An emphasis on the transcendence of the Ultimate Ego,

¹ L., p. 62.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 62. 73.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

however, is not all amiss. On the contrary, it enhances the reality of the human ego. It serves two purposes. On one hand it emphasises the existence of the finite ego, and on the other it brings to light the individuality and the egohood of the Infinite.

Secondly, transcendence satisfies the religious consciousness better. The latter demands :

(1) That the Ultimate Reality must be conceived as transcendent. "It must be wholly an other. Because the despair of man, amidst the obstacles that originate in his own nature and those that originate in the nature of the world around him, demand that help should come from a source which is other than the sources of his troubles, and which has full control over the whole world of man and things. Indeed this succour from the source over and above the world is the very purpose for which religious consciousness postulates the existence of such a Being."¹—However this Being, who is the "wholly other", does yet encircle and encompass the finite selves and the world; indeed, there can be nothing as a "wholly other" to Him.²

(2) That the Ultimate Reality must be a personality. This indeed is the very burden of Iqbal's whole thought. The Ultimate Reality is a Person or an Ego. "Our criticism of experience reveals the Ultimate Reality to be a rationally directed life which in view of our experience of life cannot be conceived except as an

¹ M. T., pp. 57. 58.

² L., p. 62.

organic whole, as something closely knit together and possessing a central point of reference. This being the character of life, the Ultimate Life can only be conceived as an Ego.”¹ He is a “unique” individual. Individuality however does not involve finitude in this case. He is not space bound. There is no space enveloping Him from outside. Nor is He Infinite in the sense of spatial infinity. His infinity is intensive and not extensive. “The infinity of the Ultimate Ego consists in the infinite inner possibilities of His creative activity of which the universe as known to us, is only a partial expression.”²

More particularly, the personality of the Ultimate Ego involves (a) Creativeness (b) Omniscience (c) Omnipotence (d) Eternity; and Iqbal’s thought has room for them all.

(a) The Ultimate Ego is essentially *creative*, and its creativeness is infinite. He is not a mere contriver, acting on something already given.³ This would make Him imperfect and impotent. Nor is He the originator of matter in the sense of something apart and external to Himself.⁴ It is no compliment to His wisdom to have created His own difficulties by first creating matter and then to have hammered it to His own desires.⁵ He is Creator from within. “To Him the not-self does not present itself as a confronting ‘other’; otherwise it would have to be like our finite

¹ L., p. 58.

² *Ibid.*, p. 61.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 23.

self in spatial relation with the confronting 'other.' What we call nature or the not-self is only a fleeting moment in the life of God." ¹ Therefore, creation for the Ultimate Ego, is the unfoldment of His own inner possibilities. Further, a self must have a character of its own, *i.e.*, it must have a uniform mode of behaviour. For "a self is unthinkable without a character." ² The Ultimate Self too, must therefore, have a character. Now, Nature is an organic whole possessing a uniform mode of behaviour. Being organic to the life of God, its behaviour can be regarded as the habitual mode of Divine activity. Thereby Nature itself becomes infinite, because it is the mode of Divine activity. It is infinite for it belongs to a self whose inner possibilities of Creation are boundless; and consequently, its infinity is intensive and not extensive or spatial.

(b) The Ultimate Ego is *omniscient*. With regard to finite beings, knowledge is always knowledge of something other than the knower. There is a "veritable 'other' supposed to exist *per se* and confronting the knowing ego." ³ Nor does this perspective disappear in the act of introspection. The knower does here too, for ever remain apart from the object of his knowledge. The Ultimate Ego, however, does not confront a veritable other. In Him the act of knowledge and the object known are one.⁴ He is all-inclusive and all-comprehensive. His knowledge is creational. He knows and is at the same time Himself

¹ L., p. 53.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*, p. 33.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 74

the material of His Knowledge. Thus His knowledge is necessarily omniscience, because there is nothing outside Him. This means that God sees the entire sweep of history in one indivisible act of perception. Omniscience should not be taken to mean that everything is already given and fixed and God has to take a note of it only.¹ His perception is not a perception of something outside Himself. It is a living creative activity. He creates as He knows; and He knows as He creates. The future then "certainly exists in the organic whole of God's creative life, but it pre-exists as an open possibility and not as a fixed order of events with definite outlines".²

(c) The Ultimate Ego is *omnipotent*. But what is omnipotence? It does not mean unlimited power which is "blind and capricious".³ For in a sense, it is limited; it is limited by His own nature, by His wisdom and His Goodness. "All activity creational or otherwise is a kind of limitation without which it is impossible to conceive God as a concrete operative ego".⁴ This limitation does not, however, make God impotent or powerless. Only His power is inherently related to His wisdom and His Goodness. God's infinite power is not revealed in the "arbitrary and the capricious", but in the "recurrent, the regular, and the orderly". The Divine Will essentially moves in the direction of the Good.—But here it may be asked whether evil and pain is not palpable in the world

¹ L., p. 74.

² *Ibid.*, p. 75.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

⁴ *Ibid.*

which seems to conflict with the omnipotence, wisdom, and goodness of God. The fact of evil may be side-tracked, but the phenomena of pain remains a veritable fact. How is it then possible to reconcile pain and evil with Divine Goodness? Iqbal's answer is that the universe is a growing universe.¹ The phenomena of growth is tending towards the evolution and perfection of egos.² In man egohood has found its relative perfection, but total perfection is still far beyond. The phenomena of pain and visible evil help us to realise our egohood and to persist in our aspiration for perfection. Evil and pain, therefore, are not to be regarded as absolute. They are relative to our success or failure in our attempts to perfect our egohood and personality.³

(d) The Ultimate Ego is *eternal*; He is eternal because He is the Ultimate Ego. But what is eternity? Ordinarily it is conceived as a time having no beginning and no end. In the world of phenomena there is a succession and change. This leads us to think that there is always a beginning to a beginning and always an end even to an endless succession. Now this view of time is essentially serial and untrue. But if we look to our own self we find that here there is change without succession. All the inner states are interpenetrating each other, and we cannot tell where the one begins and the other ends. Pure Duration, then, is an organic whole in which the past is not left

¹ L., p. 77.

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

behind ; it is moving along with and operating in the present. Nor is the future given as lying ahead, yet to be traversed. It is already in the present. It is given within the present as an open possibility.¹ This time, *viz.*, Duration alone is applicable to the life of the Ultimate Ego. His Self being an all-comprehensive self holds the entire sweep of history as a moment in its inner life. There is to Him, therefore, no beginning and no end. All is given at a glance. He does not traverse, like ourselves, the history of time with a low and gradual steps. Indeed, He is Himself the source of all time and therefore prior to it.

(3) Further, the religious consciousness demands that there should be the possibility of coming into close contact with the Ultimate Ego. This contact or communion is achieved in the act of prayer. Now prayer in its very nature assumes the existence of two persons, *i.e.*, one who prays and the other to whom it prays. The human self, therefore, must be essentially other than the Divine Self. Prayer has meaning only in so far as the human ego is conceived as having a separate being of its own. Iqbal emphatically maintains this quality of the human and the Divine Egos. The human ego never dwindles and vanishes in the Divine Ego.

But what is prayer ? The anthropomorphic theists believe that it is an act by which miracles can be wrought. "It can deflect a streak of lightning or a

¹ L., p. 47.

bullet from its path or that it can draw fire from heaven as was done by the prayer of Elijah.”¹ Iqbal demurs. But there is yet another view of prayer. “The presupposition of prayer is: Your heavenly father knows what you need, and its concluding sentence is: Not my will but thy will be done. Its aim is not to conquer nature by supernatural means but to conquer the human heart, which wavering between defiance and despondency is not able to yield and adopt itself to its fate.”² This conception of prayer is essentially an outcome of the pantheistic modes of thought. Here there is a total negation of the human ego. Moreover, the will of God being a heavy stone round our neck, the possibility of prayer does not arise at all. Iqbal with his characteristic dynamic philosophy of the human ego, does not accept this view. To him prayer is firstly instinctive to the heart of man.³ Man cannot but pray. It is a yearning for help and guidance, and as such it is a vital factor of all religious consciousness. Secondly, prayer is a mode of reflection. It aims at spiritual illumination. It is “man’s inner yearning for a response in the awful silence of the universe.”⁴ The act of prayer, therefore, brings the human ego in direct contact with Ultimate Reality. Thirdly, prayer has its efficacy. It deepens our emotions and dynamises our will, and by doing so gives us power and force to bring about radical changes in the world around us. “It is a

¹ I. p. , p. 259.² *Ibid.*, p. 261.³ L. , p. 84⁴ *Ibid.* , p. 87.

unique process of discovery whereby the searching ego affirms itself in the very moment-of self-negation, and thus discovers its own worth and justification as a dynamic factor in the life of the universe.”¹

(4) Religious consciousness further demands that the human ego must be capable of continued existence, throughout an endless time. In other words the human self must be immortal.² It is by being immortal alone that the finite ego can approach the Infinite.³ Our life is not like a bubble, which having once been, shall never be again. If so, all our religious aspirations would be meaningless and vain.

Prayer and immortality all the more go to emphasis the religious or the theistic consciousness in Iqbal's system of thought. He has by gradual steps gone far away from the pantheistic modes of thinking. Indeed the fact that he holds Ultimate Ego to be a Personality which has the attributes of creativeness, omniscience and eternity, make him a champion of theism.

Iqbal is thus a theist. But mark that his Ultimate Ego is not the God of the old theists. He is not “the God in the Heavens”. Iqbal's God comprehends the whole universe. In Him alone the finite egos find their being. “Like pearls do we live and move and have our being in the perpetual flow of

¹ *Ibid.*

² This point has already been dealt in Chapter III.

³ *L.*, pp. 110-111.

Divine life".¹ His God is the Absolute of philosophy. It is the Ultimate Ego which comprehends in itself all beings, all finite egos.

We may now compare Iqbal's position regarding the Absolute with that of his teacher McTaggart. McTaggart, following Hegel, calls the ultimate reality as the Absolute.² On the principle of differentiation, the Absolute is broken up into finite egos. McTaggart, consequently maintains that the finite selves are eternal and that the Absolute is not an ego or self. "I believe," says McTaggart, "that it would be difficult to find a proof of our own immortality, which did not place God in the position of a community, rather than a person; and equally difficult to find a conception of personal God which did not render our existence dependent on His will—a will whose decisions our reason could not foresee".³

Iqbal would reject both these assertions. Taking the first: the Absolute cannot be a mere community; for there can be no community without individuals. If the Absolute were a community, it could not exist over and above the finite egos. Moreover, the differentiations of the Absolute, being once for all fixed and numbered, there remains no possibility of the creation of new egos in the universe. But the members of the association are not fixed. "New members are ever coming to birth". The universe, therefore, is not a

¹ L., p. 68.

² H. C. Sec. 62, p. 58.

³ *Ibid.*, Intro., p. 3.

“completed act”.¹ The process of creation is still going on and man, too, takes his share in it. Further, if the finite egos are the necessary differentiations of the Absolute there must be a permanent and eternal orderliness and adjustment, in this association. But that is not the case. This orderliness is not eternally achieved. “We are gradually travelling from chaos to cosmos and are helpers in this achievement”.² Nor is this achievement an unconscious one, but is “consciously and instinctively” gained through our efforts.

Taking the second part of McTaggart’s statement, *viz.*, that it is difficult to find a conception of a personal God which did not render our existence dependent upon his will, Iqbal would say that this is not exactly the case. God must be regarded as a person. He is, however, not an anthropomorphic being or an architectonic intelligence, acting upon the world as if from without. He comprehends and encompasses the whole universe. The finite egos are part and parcel of Him. Our life is organic to His Being. But that, however, does not mean the loss of our egohood or freedom. He has of His own accord, chosen the finite egos as participators in His life.³ Further, to grasp this delicate relation of the finite with the infinite, an example may prove helpful. The human ego, as belonging to the spatial and the temporal orders is lost in space and time. But as being an ego—as possessed of personality, it is separate and distinct from them.⁴

¹ S. S., Intro., p. xviii.

² *Ibid.*

³ L., p. 75.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 112.

In the same way, my existence in relation to God is my own and my thoughts and actions are self-determined. A personal God, therefore, is not necessarily opposed to the being and freedom of the finite egos.

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INDEX

Abnormal, 33
 Absolute, 33, 34, 82, 88
 Absolute reality, 4, 16
 Appearance, 18
 Appreciative self, 55
 Aristotle, 51, 52
 Ashari, 1
 Atoms, 50, 51

Barzakh, 48 *ff.*
 Becoming, 1
 Being, 66, 74
 Bergson, 5, 15, 21, 29, 38, 46, 47, 52,
 54, 55, 57, 59, 61, 62, 63, 67 *ff.*, 68 *ff.*
 Berkeley, 51,
 Brain, disorganised, 22

Categories, 18
 Change, 37, 54, 55, 78
 Communicable, 18, 29
 Consciousness, 3, 19, 37, 48
 Creative, 64, 66, 69, 77
 Creativeness, 75, 81
 Creator, 66, 75

Descartes, 35
 Destiny, 44
 Dimensions, 12, 14
 Divine Ego, 79
 Divine Self, 79
 Divine Will, 77
 Duration, 15, 47, 55, 68 *ff.*
 Duration, pure, 78
 Dynamic, 6, 56, 80, 81
 Dynamic appearance, 11

Ego, 21, 28, 27, 35, 39, 40, 42, 43, 44,
 45, 47, 50, 54, 59, 60, 67, 74
 Ego, all-comprehensive, 67
 Egohood, 8, 48, 59, 60, 67, 74, 78
 Ego, ultimate, 68, 69, 72, 73, 75, 76
 Einstein, 51
 Elan, 46, 61
 Elan Vital, 56, 62, 67 *ff.*
 Emanation, 33
 Empirical, 2, 6
 Empirical reality, 4
 Empiricism, 5, 6, 37
 Eternal, 1, 78
 Eternity, 20, 75
 Eternal recurrence, 45
 Experience, 2, 10, 15, 16, 17, 19, 37,
 50, 52, 53, 66

Feeling, 19
 Freedom, 1, 3, 7, 41, 43, 44, 63, 66,
 69, 83, 84
 Freud, 26

Ghazzali, 4, 36
 God, 3, 4, 7, 8, 12, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21,
 22, 28, 33, 71, 72, 77, 78, 81, 82,
 83, 84
 Goodness, 77
 Goodness, Divine, 78

Haldane, 43
 Heart, 17, 18
 Hegel, 33, 34

- Ibn Arabi, 17
 Ibn Rushd, 45
 Immanence, 78
 Immanent, 20, 78
 Immortality, 3, 7, 45, 46, 48, 49, 69, 71, 62
 Impersonal, 8
 Incommunicable, 39
 Inner experience, 23
 Individual, 59
 Individuality, 45, 67, 74
 Infinite, 7, 69, 73, 75, 81, 83
 Intellect, 17, 45
 Intuition, 4, 5, 6, 7, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 31, 35, 36, 37, 48, 53, 54, 69, 70, 71
 Iqbal, 1, 4, 7, 8, 10, 15, 16, 31, 33, 37, 39, 45, 48, 50, 53, 57, 61, 67 *ff.*, 73
 Iraqi, 11, 12, 14
 Ishq, 39
 Islamic Mystic, 4

 Jung, 27

 Kant, 2, 4, 9, 10, 15, 36, 43, 46
 Knowledge, 9, 16, 18, 29, 30, 35, 41, 76

 Leibnitz, 60 *ff.*,
 Life, 3
 Love, 34, 58

 Matter, 51, 58
 Material world, 8
 McTaggart, 33, 32
 Mechanical, 3, 47, 55, 60, 62
 Mechanism, 3, 40
 Metaphysics, 15, 31, 58

 Mind, 8, 17, 61
 Monad, 60 *ff.*,
 Monism, spiritual, 61
 Moral Perfection, 46
 Morality, 41
 Mujaddid, 70, 71
 Mystic, 19
 Mystic experience, 18, 22, 24, 29
 Mystic consciousness, 24

 Nazam, 1
 Necessity, 42
 Neurotic, 23
 Newton, 54
 Nieholson, 3
 Nietzsche, 45, 56, 57, 58, 59, 61
 Noumena, 9, 10

 Omniscience, 75, 77, 81
 Omniscient, 76
 Omnipotence, 75, 77
 Organic, 64
 Ouspensky, 12, 14

 Pantheism, 30, 32, 34
 Percept, 17
 Perception, 5, 13, 16, 17, 21, 32
 Perception, direct, 21, 22, 36
 Perfect happiness, 47
 Perfect virtue, 47
 Person, 20, 74
 Personal, 8
 Personality, 23, 56, 59, 81
 Phenomena, 9, 32, 40, 43, 44, 55, 78
 Plato, 1
 Psychic, 15
 Psychical, 5
 Psychopath, 22

Purpose, 42, 61, 74
 Purposive, 42, 65, 67

Rationalist, 5
 Rationalistic, 6, 52
 Real, 16, 28
 Reality, 7, 19, 50, 55, 56, 62, 65
 Reality, physical, 51
 Recognition, 21
 Religion, 24, 25, 27, 29, 58
 Religion, essence of, 27

Schopenhaur, 57
 Science, 1, 2
 Self, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 20, 81, 85, 40, 48,
 56, 59, 66
 Self-conscious, 7, 61
 Self-directing, 7
 Self-evolving, 64
 Selfhood, 68 ff.
 Self, unique, 20
 Sensations, 54
 Sense-experience, 2, 3, 4
 Sense-perception, 17, 52
 Sequence, 20
 Sex-impulse, 26
 Soul, 47
 Speculation, 2
 Spirit, 61
 Spiritual experience, 23
 Static, 15, 53, 56
 Sub-conscious, 63
 Sub-egos, 67
 Space, 9, 10, 11, 12, 47, 50, 51, 55
 Spatial, 14, 15
 Spatio-temporal, 15, 16
 Subjective, 12
 Subjectivism, 5, 26, 56

Succession, 37, 55, 73
 Succession without change, 47

Teleology, 62, 63
 Teleological, 42, 66
 Theism, 30
 Theoretical consciousness, 4
 Thought, 18, 57
 Time, 9, 10, 15, 48, 54
 Time, infinite, 46
 Time, serial, 20
 Transcendence, 73
 Transcendent, 2, 20, 73
 Time, serial character of, 47

Ultimate, 4, 28
 Ultimate Ego, 78, 79, 81, 82
 Ultimate Life, 75
 Ultimate Reality, 5, 27, 40, 69, 70,
 72, 73, 74, 80
 Ultimate self, 70, 76
 Uncommunicable, 18
 Unconscious, 26
 Unity, 6, 19, 38, 57
 Unity, perfect, 40
 Unity, unanalysable, 19, 20
 Universe, 12, 28, 52, 59, 61, 64, 65,
 67, 72, 78, 80, 81, 82

Vacuum, 51

Whitehead, 51, 66
 Whole, 17, 19, 34
 Will-to-egohood, 59, 66
 Will-to-individuate, 61
 Will-to-live well, 57
 Will-to-power, 57, 58, 59

